

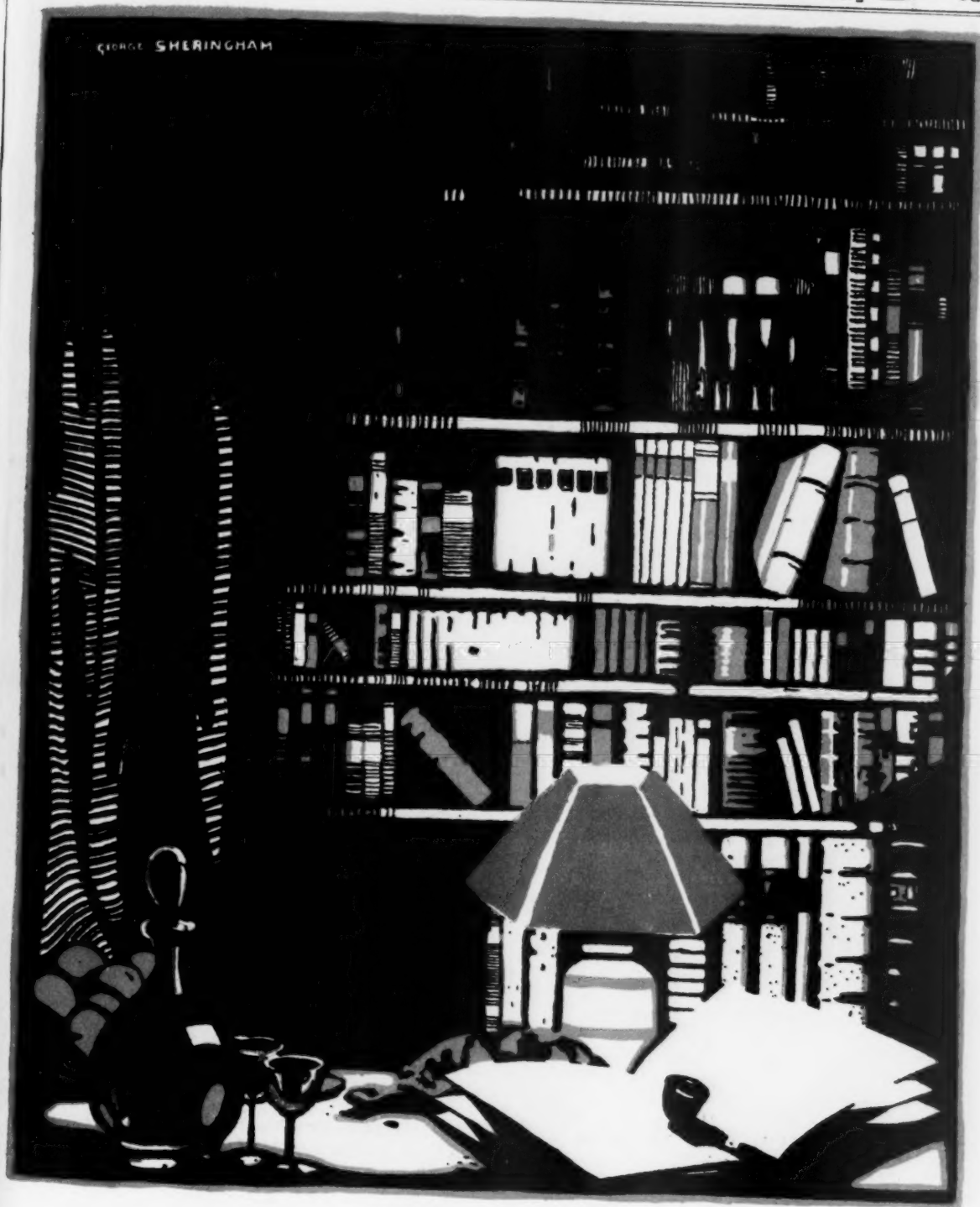
THE SATURDAY REVIEW

No. 3867. Vol. 148.

7 December 1929

[REGISTERED AS
A NEWSPAPER]

6d.



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NOTES OF THE WEEK

THE new Traffic Bill is bound to intensify the battle between motorists and pedestrians. The Bill itself is of interest to all, for all are either pedestrians or motorists, and in either capacity they suffer. It is drawn on comprehensive lines, which were widely foreshadowed and are based mainly on the recommendations of the Transport Commission. Most of the reforms provided for are overdue; at the least the Bill brings legislation tolerably into line with modern traffic facts. Parliament will have to give detailed attention to the subject of compulsory insurance. The principle is unassailable, but the means by which it is to

be effected will require close scrutiny. The provisions for dividing the country into twelve transport areas controlled by commissioners, and for further powers for local authorities, will do something to remove chaos and unnecessary competition from the roads. But the most important parts of the Bill so far as the man in the street (pregnant phrase!) is concerned, are those that aim at making both motoring and walking less perilous.

Abolition of the speed limit was probably inevitable. In any case nobody observes it. There is wisdom in retaining a speed limit (at the reasonable speed of thirty miles an hour) for heavy vehicles like motor coaches, many of which habitually travel now at much faster speeds; and there is

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also wisdom in raising the age limit at which youths may ride motor cycles. But why stop at 16? The minimum age for driving motor cars is 17; while it was about it the Bill might with advantage have made the two ages coincide. Irresponsibility is every bit as dangerous on two wheels as on four, and instances of dangerous and inconsiderate driving are at least as frequent on motor cycles as in motor cars. Posterity may well judge us mad to let children loose on the roads with powerful instruments of destruction.

With severer penalties in contemplation for careless and dangerous driving, the police and the courts, on whom the growth of motoring has already placed enormous burdens, will have their duties increased. The abolition of the speed limit for ordinary cars will oblige them to give far stricter attention to furious driving, but the retention of a limit for heavy cars will necessitate a continuance of the habit of trapping. The introduction of a traffic code for all road users may do something to mitigate the worst terrors of the road, but since it is provided that neglect to observe the code will not be punishable, half its effectiveness seems likely to be lost. When the Bill is passed the development of motoring will still remain ahead of its control. Pedestrians, for their part, will be wise to face the facts and aim at practical solutions of their problem. Inevitably the time must come when main roads are reserved exclusively for motors. Pedestrians should press for alternative accommodation everywhere, in the form of footways adequately guarded; and in return for the sacrifice of highways to the motorist should insist on a legal ban against wheels on all byways, bridal-tracks, heaths and hill-tops. This could easily be done, and would be but common justice.

The Prime Minister's "secret" luncheon this week to business men was a move towards the practical application of an idea for a board of economic advisers which he has had in his mind since he was last in office. In matters of defence, Governments have at their command an Imperial Committee of experts. Nowadays economic problems are more pressing, recurrent, and at least as difficult to solve as those of defence, and it is unreasonable that where the latter are catered for, the former should be neglected. The luncheon—the second of its kind—was merely exploratory, to discover whether an economic committee is possible, and certain quarters have been at pains to deny that there is any further significance in the move or any intention of formulating a national economic policy. If there is not, there ought to be. Continuity of policy is agreed upon as a principle in foreign relationships and in defence. The nation's biggest and most urgent problems to-day are industrial, and it is little short of fantastic that they should continue to be tackled on petty party lines.

The Committee on Electoral Reform, with Lord Ullswater as chairman, has held its first meeting. Lord Hewart resigned his place on

the Liberal panel following Mr. Baldwin's objection to a judge serving in that capacity, and his place has been taken by Lord Craigmyle. What was the objection to Lord Hewart? He was nominated by a party, it is true, but to be so nominated did not necessarily identify him with that party; the panel, though a party panel, need not be composed of party men. Indeed, the less of party atmosphere there is about the enquiry and the more impartiality, the better for its chances of fairness and agreement. Lord Hewart himself holds that his position as a member of the House of Lords fits him for a place in the enquiry, but at the sign of opposition he was right to retire; he seems to have been badly treated in not being earlier informed by his nominators that there were murmurings against his selection. The Committee's chances of reaching unanimity are questionable. Lord Ullswater has rowed this course before, he knows the currents and the bends; but he has rather a scratch crew. It is at least doubtful whether the Committee will reach its conclusions in time for a Bill to be passed through both Houses in the lifetime of the present Parliament. The Liberals are the only anxious party. Both Conservatives and Labour are satisfied with the *status quo*, each hoping and believing that the existing electoral gamble will favour their own side. Conservatives in particular will live to regret it.

On Tuesday of this week, Mr. Hoover delivered his address on the opening of the Seventy-First Regular Session of the United States Congress. In comparing his speech with those of his predecessors, one cannot but be impressed by the space he devoted to international affairs. Internationally, the new Session promises to be one of the most important ever held. Among other things, it will be called upon to vote America's accession to the Permanent Court of International Justice, and although Mr. Hoover was at pains to point out that such a step would not bring the United States nearer to the League of Nations, accession to the Court and acceptance of the obligations involved thereby would, in many ways, be a greater advance towards international co-operation than the ratification of the vaguer Kellogg Pact. Further, the results of the Five Power Naval Conference in January and, more especially, of the progress of Anglo-American relations, will depend in large part upon the attitude of the United States Congress.

Mr. Hoover wins our admiration above all because of his courage. Never having played a part in politics at home, he has yet stood out against the "party bosses" and has shown more initiative than any other President of recent years. The references in his speech to the cost of the defence forces of the United States were particularly frank. They were also well-timed. He pointed out that the expenditure on defence has risen from 267 million dollars in 1914 to over 730 millions this year, and that, if the present programmes are carried out, even this figure will soon be considerably increased. Although the

United States is undoubtedly less likely to be a victim of aggression than any other Great Power in the world, the total number of officers and men, including reserves, has increased from just under 300,000 in 1914 to 728,000 in 1929; and, in Mr. Hoover's own words, "the total of our expenditure is in excess of those of the most highly militarized nations in the world." We call attention to these figures in no spirit of self-justification for our own defence expenditure, but because no real reduction is possible until facts are faced squarely on both sides of the Atlantic.

It cannot be said that the first attempt to put the Kellogg Pact into action has been very fortunate. Last July, when the Chinese, acting under orders from Mukden, seized the Chinese Eastern Railway and imprisoned the Russian officials engaged in its joint administration, Mr. Stimson, the American Secretary of State, reminded Russia and China of their obligations under the Peace Pact. No further action was taken—mainly for fear of offending Japan—until a day or two ago, when, on Mr. Stimson's suggestion, the United States, Great Britain and France hinted to Moscow and Nanking that their good reputations depended upon their observance of their promises under the Pact. Had this initiative been taken earlier, it would probably have met with success; neither disputant wishes to offend the American Government and the men behind it who dispose of the dollars of Wall Street. But it has come too late. In the opinion of the closest and most interested observers—the Japanese—its effect will be merely to stiffen Chinese resistance at a moment when General Chang Hsueh-liang, the Governor of Manchuria, had agreed to reopen negotiations on conditions decidedly favourable to Russia.

The Chinese Eastern Railway should belong, of course, to those bondholders who supplied the capital with which it was built at the beginning of the present century. But the Soviet Government shows little respect for private property, and ever since 1924 the railway has been under the joint control of the Chinese and Russian Governments, with the result, according to the former, that the Russian officials have been more occupied in carrying on Bolshevik propaganda than in running the railway. Still, it is difficult to support the high-handed action of the Chinese in imprisoning these officials and in cutting the shortest route to the Far East, and Russia has acted much as any other country would, in insisting upon a restoration of the *status quo* before the beginning of negotiations. These negotiations will need careful watching. They may lead to a breach between Mukden and Nanking and to very serious rivalry between Russia and Japan for control over Manchuria.

A few days ago M. Jaspar resigned his post as Prime Minister of Belgium owing to the reluctance of the Liberal Party to accept his plans for turning the University of Ghent into a purely Flemish University. He has now been

asked by the King to form a new Ministry, and his chances of success are improved by the tardy recognition by the Liberal Party that there is a large majority in Parliament in favour of the Ghent University project, which should now go through without further delay. On the other hand, there will be a severe struggle over the teaching of French in primary and secondary schools in the Flemish provinces. Belgium celebrates the centenary of its independence in a few months' time, and it is greatly to be hoped that the Walloons, on the one hand, and the Flamings on the other, will not make these celebrations of union remarkable by demonstrations of disunity. The majority of the population is Flemish-speaking, and it is quite time for the French-speaking *élite* to realize it can no longer make of Belgium a country always ready to fall in with suggestions and advice that come to it from France.

The R.I.B.A. has secured a fighting President when he was very much wanted. Sir Banister Fletcher, in his inaugural address, attacked the Charing Cross scheme which is shortly to come up for sanction in Parliament, and in last Friday's *Times* he signed a letter on behalf of his colleagues in which its weaknesses were thoroughly and effectively set forth. In face of this opposition, backed as it is by individual architects of authority like Sir Reginald Blomfield and the leading representatives of town-planning, it will be difficult to force a hastily adopted measure through. To assert that the criticism is launched at the last hour is not exact. The Conference on Thames Bridges has repeatedly addressed itself to all the parties concerned; but without effect. Mr. MacColl will deal further with the subject next week.

Our Agricultural Correspondent writes: "The West of Scotland Milk Pool is finding itself in difficulties that arise from its own former success. By regulating its supplies of liquid milk to the market and preventing surplus from being dumped upon it, the Pool improved the prices paid to producers. These included a minority of producers not in the Pool, and they, who had done nothing to create these better prices, have been reaping greater advantage from the Pool than the Pool members. For the members sell only a percentage of their milk in order to prevent a surplus being offered, whereas the non-members sell 100 per cent. of their production at the prices that the self-discipline of the Pool makes possible. Thus those who take a short view see less and less inducement to join the Pool and take increasing profits by producing outside it. In practice, however, it is evident that such a course can only lead to the eventual breaking up of the Pool and the ruin of the West of Scotland milk industry in a welter of over-production and bad prices. This brings to the fore a question that will have to be faced, namely, that when a large majority of producers have organized themselves, may it not be essential to compel the small minority that have remained outside to come in?"

LONDON TRAFFIC CONTROL

THERE is much to interest, nothing to alarm, in the Minister of Transport's statement last Monday on London traffic. The scheme which the Government has in mind evidently exists only in outline as yet, and a great deal will depend on the way in which the details are filled in; but in neither of the two "principles" of public ownership and business management which Mr. Herbert Morrison says that he is attempting to combine is there anything at which reasonable people need take fright. It is common ground that there should be one central authority for the whole of London passenger traffic, and that from its establishment better public service, as well as very considerable economies, may be expected.

In the last Parliament a Bill was promoted jointly by the London County Council and the London bus and underground railway companies to secure this common control. It was passed through the House of Commons, but, the dissolution coming before it could be brought before the Lords, the Bill was by special motion held over to this Parliament. One of the first actions of the Government was to advise the new Parliament to reject this Bill, and at the same time they engaged themselves to bring in a new and better scheme. It is this new scheme that Mr. Herbert Morrison described so vaguely on Monday last, and the only difference between the two plans apparent so far is that the new plan embodies what is called the "principle" of public ownership.

It is to be hoped that London Conservatives are not going to be so foolish as to shy at that, for if they do they will make themselves the laughing-stock of their provincial brethren. Public ownership of the tramways is the rule, not the exception, and where there are several local authorities in one large area it is the rule for them to arrange running powers over each other's lines or in other ways to prevent conflict of management and promote economies. So far as the shareholders of the underground railways are concerned, all that will happen under the new scheme is that the title of their holdings will be changed. The value of their securities will be just as good, or even better, than before. As it is, some twenty-seven millions of the capital is held by public bodies.

Mr. Morrison is an able man, and he has done some hard thinking about the best methods of working a publicly owned monopoly. It would be ridiculous for Conservatives, whose Government brought in the great Electricity Supply Scheme, which is publicly owned, to take fright at the phrase "public ownership" as though it were the spectre of predatory Socialism. By Socialism, people have ordinarily understood a system of managing industry in which civil servants replace business men, and any profits, instead of going to private shareholders, go to a public body, whether State or municipality, instead of to private shareholders. But Mr. Morrison does not believe in business management by civil servants. Earlier this session he expressed strong objection to public ownership in a form which substituted lobbying in the House of Commons for the ordinary methods of securing agreements about wages,

He recognizes that there is a difference between mere administration and the enterprise necessary to run a successful and expanding business. For the first, the slow methods of the civil service and their deliberate rejection of all risks may be enterprise. In the management of public (as of private) business we need the best business brains that can be bought, and we have to pay the price. Moreover, these business heads must be free to reward proved competence and punish incompetence. That is what he calls the "principle" of business management which he hopes to combine with public control. The nervous may call it Socialism if they like, but ordinary rational men will see in it nothing but a new experiment in a public trust and will be content to await the publication of the full details and to judge them on their merits when they appear.

Provided that the rights of private property are respected, and provided further that we have reasonable guarantees of efficiency in management and of enterprise, what Mr. Morrison calls the principle of public ownership will merely make a change in the title of the company and bring into existence a large new class of deferred shareholders who will be the general public. Gone, of course, are the hopes of large dividends; but there are compensations in the elimination of wasteful competition. And what public utility company in fact ever makes dividends above the trustee standard, or what publicly-created monopoly should ever be allowed to do so?

The truth is that the old notion of State Socialism is dead. The sole issue between the Bill of the last Parliament and the new Bill which is now being prepared is technical rather than practical and depends on a multitude of details which have yet to be produced, and on which Conservatives will be wise to reserve judgment. But they will also be wise not to commit themselves to opposition in advance. In what respect will Mr. Morrison's public trust differ from the management of the Post Office as Lord Wolmer would have it? The striking fact about Mr. Morrison's statement is the extent to which it justifies Lord Wolmer's criticisms of the Post Office management. The indictment against the Post Office is that it is not run as a genuine business enterprise and is producing neither the service nor the profits that it would do if it were so run. And the immediate moral to be drawn from Mr. Morrison's statement on London transport is that it may also be a draft of reform for our future management of the Post Office. The danger point of Socialism is no longer in its advocacy of public ownership of this or that natural monopoly, and there are enough real dangers in these days without our shying at those which are imaginary.

The real danger is the new theory of taxation which regards it not as the necessary sacrifice that has to be made if certain public services are to be performed, but as a means of redistributing incomes in a way that the majority for the time being may think more equitable. That is the theory against which Conservatives should concentrate their opposition. But the public ownership of natural monopolies like passenger transport in our great cities need not as a question of principle stick in any Conservative throat.

As an issue involving many difficult and complicated details no doubt any scheme of publicly-owned trust will have to be very carefully examined, but it is not there that the fight with dangerous Socialism will be joined.

TWOPENNY PIECES

MR. ADAMSON'S Bill to "amend the law relating to the right of public representation or performance of copyright of music" was given a second reading last week by the House of Commons, and now awaits the attentions of a Select Committee. To most composers it seems like the nationalization of music with only so much of compensation as is sufficient to be insulting, since the third clause definitely fixes the price of the right to perform any piece of music at not more than twopence! The Bill is brief, blunt, and by no means clear, but presumably this clause entitles anyone who once has paid an extra twopence on the price of a piece of music to play it in public for so long as the public will endure it, with no extra reward to the composer. The right to perform will go with the sheet, so that anyone who begs, borrows, or steals the sheet on which twopence has been paid also acquires the performing right.

If this is not confiscation, we should like to know what is. At any rate, Mr. Shaw, who recently did young painters a deal of harm by announcing that five pounds was the just price of any picture, has suddenly rediscovered the propriety of property, the beauties of free contract, and the absurdities of a maximum wage. He has denounced this preposterous measure of plunder and given it public execution. We are surprised to find so keen a devotee of equalitarian Socialism as Mr. Shaw suddenly championing a man's right to drive his own bargain. But if it is composers to-day, it may be playwrights to-morrow. A fellow-feeling has made him wondrous keen.

Although the Bill as it stands is absurd and cannot possibly be allowed to emerge from a Select Committee in its present state of crudity, there must be some motive for its promotion other than the mere madness diagnosed by Mr. Shaw. The reason for it lies in discontent with the activities of the Performing Right Society. The collection of copyright fees on music is naturally immensely complicated. Copyright music is being played for gain by isolated individuals and by orchestras of all sizes in all sorts and conditions of theatres, cinemas, clubs, dance-halls, and so on, and the composer cannot possibly collect a host of small dues. Accordingly, the Performing Right Society has come into existence for the benefit of producers and composers. An orchestra arranges with the P.R.S. for the right to use all P.R.S. music for a lump sum to cover a fixed period, while the composers' contract with the Society is to give all its subscribers the run of their work for a certain fee. The P.R.S. has built up a powerful organization with a large force of inspectors whose job is to keep an eye on the poachers who use music for gain without paying any fee. It is alleged that this organization has become

oppressive, that its charges are too high, and that the assessments in orchestras are simply imposed by an irresponsible autocracy against which there is no appeal.

The supporters of the Bill were able to quote instances of small dance-halls, having the price of their licences suddenly raised by the P.R.S. from five to sixteen guineas and so on, and it is perfectly obvious that, under the system as it works at present, there will always be grievances. The purchaser is rarely convinced that the just price and the quoted price are identical. On the other hand, our own investigations reveal the fact that the performing rights of music can still be bought extremely cheaply from that supposed oligarchy of skinflints, the P.R.S. For instance, it has arranged with the National Federation of Women's Institutes that the Institutes can have the freedom of P.R.S. music, which contains some two million works, at a fee of two shillings per annum per institute. Hastings Corporation pays £120 a year for a six months' season of concerts given daily, with extra concerts three days a week and three military bands in constant work. An inclusive royalty of £120 for the liberty to use any music on the gigantic P.R.S. catalogue does not seem extortionate. If anybody has a grievance it would seem to be the composer. Yet it is this poor wretch who is now to be plundered to atone for the alleged avarice of the P.R.S.

The Labour demand for the Bill springs from the disgust of Labour clubs on discovering that the music used at their "sixpenny hops" has to be paid for just as much as the cake and lemonade. There are certain to be hard cases, for the simple reason that perfect equity is never achieved in this world. The inspectors of the P.R.S. are probably like all other inspectors and enjoy showing what smart fellows they are. There may have been cases where individual inspectors have provoked a performance of some copyright tune in order to penalize the player for lack of a P.R.S. licence, just as Government agents coax shopkeepers into selling something a minute after the official closing-time. But, even were such cases proved against the Society beyond any doubt, the remedy outlined in the Bill is like setting the house on fire in order to keep your feet warm. Composers of music may not like the terms they get from the P.R.S. any more than the users of the music, but they are certainly not going to be taken in by the familiar yarn about many cheap sales being the best possible advertisement. Sweet may be the uses of publicity, but limelight is no substitute for bread and butter.

The Bill has one useful clause. It insists that all published copies of music shall have a plain statement as to whether a fee is imposed on the piece in question. Some tunes are available without fee because the sellers want to popularize it and take their profit on the sale of sheet music. Consequently, if copyright music is unlabelled it is quite easy for people to play it in ignorance that a fee is due and so to incur the visitations of the P.R.S. There is not the slightest reason why the sheet music should not be clearly marked. But against this elementary fragment of common-sense must be set the absurdity of setting-up a maximum wage for composers. If we are to be

members of an equalitarian State, then we shall have all round a maximum wage which is also a minimum. But that composers of music should be suddenly singled out and deprived, by Act of Parliament, of the right to sell their own wares is simply preposterous. The valuation of the performing rights, by lumping all songs, symphonies and oratorios together as twopenny pieces, shows the crudity of conception behind the Bill. Its origin lies in the Labour clubs whose musical Socialists want to call their tunes without paying their piper and have no idea of the serious issues they have raised by this little plan for cheaper revels.

THE COMEDY OF WESTMINSTER

House of Commons, Thursday

IT is a sign of the highest tragedy when the main current of pity and terror is momentarily interrupted by interludes of buffoonery. Shakespeare knew the nature of tragedy when he intruded his garrulous and Rabelaisian porter before an audience, chilled with knocks of doom on the door, in Macbeth. Here, for the last week, the Unemployment Insurance Bill has been dragging its painful course through Committee and the process of pauperizing the children of a great people has been relieved and intensified at once by intrusions of the merely comic.

* * *

Question-time has served the House well in this respect. The present Ministry are, as a whole, bad answerers of questions. Not only are they timidly sparing with quite harmless information, but the manner in which some of them bang their three-penny-pieces of news on the table, as if they were half-crowns at the least, arouses the worst passions of the incorrigible asker of "supplementaries." Mr. Pethick-Lawrence for the Treasury is at once arrogant and alarmed, like a half-converted burglar testifying to a dubious inclination to repent. Sir Charles Trevelyan reads his officially-prepared replies with all the personal pride of a youth reciting his first poems. Mr. Montagu replies for the Air Ministry with a ponderosity apt to some grosser element than the airy region of his duties. Even the most inquisitive of all questioners in the House can make but little of him:

His rising fogs prevail upon the Day.

* * *

Certain subjects appear regularly on the question-paper. Not all of them are debated on party lines. The fact that a Commission is now sitting in Palestine to enquire into the late riots does not prevent the champions of Arabia and Judæa from engaging in loud conflict. Since Mahomet hovered in mid-air, the Arabs can have had no more strenuous champion than Colonel Howard-Bury. His uprising to do battle for the faithful at question-time is, however, the signal for a counter-raid by the Maccabees. Mr. Boothby, Colonel Wedgwood and Commander Kenworthy are up together to defend Jewry, and a vigorous campaign is ended only with the uprising of Mr. Speaker: "To your tents, O Israel."

* * *

Mr. Herbert Morrison is an admirable Minister of Transport; his knowledge of the winding roads of this land has provided his mind with a capacity for

steering a tortuous but efficient course over and around those obstacles to the performance of his duties which are created by the necessity of appearing to be a Socialist. His eagerly-awaited statement on Government policy with regard to London's traffic was an admirable example of this careful felicity. We are, apparently, to have "elimination of wasteful competition" (Socialist cheers); "reasonable remuneration of capital" (Opposition cheers); "public control" (Socialist cheers); "commercial management ensuring vigorous enterprise" (Opposition cheers). How all this (reminiscent of Jack Sprat and his wife) is to be brought to pass, no one knows at present, but the whole statement is an admirable exposition of Toryism applied to a modern industrial problem. We are apparently to tackle this problem as the late Government dealt with the chaotic conditions under which electrical energy is produced and sold. The solution is as remote from Socialism as it is from *laissez-faire* individualism. It is the Tory principle, Authority balanced by Liberty, which has come up to breathe for the second time.

* * *

Meanwhile we have the Dole Bill worming its way on to the Statute Book and into the minds and hearts of the people. Its progress is no triumphal one. Its own supporters are sick of it. The Clydesiders will have none of it, and have said so with a stinging emphasis not permitted to mere Tories and Liberals. They have carried the quarrel over broken promises to the length of voting solidly against the Government, and though they have been overwhelmingly defeated by the best dragooned party in the House, it is a silent and doubting regiment which has trooped obediently into the Government lobby. Indeed, it is a trying position in which the non-rebellious Labour men find themselves. Most of them said at the election exactly what the Clydesiders said. Presumably they share the convictions of the Clydesiders. It is only the courage of those convictions which is unequally distributed. What will they say to their constituents? That they were defeated by the Tories? That will not serve, because the Tories have, with equal judgment and taste, refrained from interfering in this distressing family squabble.

* * *

The root of the opposition to this Bill is in the clauses which affect young children. There is something repugnant to civic pride and to common sense in these tender blossoms being swept into the destructors of energy and happiness which the Labour Exchanges have come to mean. Under the Bill, a child of sixteen may have twenty contributions credited to him for having stayed on at school for an extra year. On leaving school, all he has to do is to take ten weeks' employment in some "blind-alley" occupation. He is then entitled to draw the dole for a year and a half and play pitch-and-toss at the street-corner with a sentimental nation's money. This is perhaps the queerest proposition, from all points of view, that has ever been advanced in the name of "Social Reform"—and its advocacy has terribly impaired the moral position of the Government. In "Labour and the Nation" these doles were to be made conditional on the recipient receiving some sort of training, but amendments moved by the Opposition, designed to keep Ministers up to their promises in this respect, have been flatly rejected with what Charles Lamb called a "pert and solemn dullness of communication." The Treasury Bench, however, gives its occupants a false sense of security. The gale is rising outside. The nation is becoming alarmed about its character.

FIRST CITIZEN

THE RECONDITIONING OF SLUMS

BY SIR PHILIP PILDITCH, M.P.

THE awakening of the public mind to the immense national importance of rehousing the occupants of the slums has reached the stage where attention is turned to the question of method and of the time within which the desired end can be achieved. Misgivings arising from the knowledge that there are a thousand slum areas in London alone, the great number of those living in congested and insanitary conditions all over the country, and the effect of these facts upon the virility of future generations, are giving place to anxious consideration of the difficulties attending any possible solution. The purchase and clearance of the sites of such districts would cost many hundreds of millions of pounds, and take many years. In 1904 the London County Council started to deal with one slum, the Tabard Street area in Southwark. It has cost for acquisition, clearing and roadmaking alone, £273,300, exclusive of the new buildings, on which over £113,000 has already been spent, and there is more to come. In it were 649 houses and 4,522 inhabitants. The State made the Council liable to house 3,580 of these, of whom about 2,580 only could be replaced on the site. That is the experience of slum clearances all over the country. It is plain that, though inevitable in some, and probably most, cases, it must be supplemented by other less drastic but reasonably effective methods.

These are realized in the policy of reconditioning foreshadowed by the Committee on Unhealthy Areas, of which Mr. Neville Chamberlain was Chairman in 1920. It has recently been stated that there are cases where reconditioning can be profitably effected by private enterprise. That would, indeed, be a most desirable solution, if possible on a large scale. But I fear it is not. During the last three years, following upon twelve years' experience of these questions of the London County Council, and a similar period in the House of Commons, I have been intimately connected with the reconditioning of a typical slum, embracing all the difficulties with which the problem can be fraught: the remodeling of Elizabethan Plymouth. A sketch of what has been done there may be of some value.

Ancient Plymouth was built in pre-Elizabethan days, upon the slopes of a rocky hill leading up from the Barbican, of Drake and Pilgrim Fathers' fame, to Charles II's citadel on the Hoe. It is a district of narrow cobbled streets with little passages and squares perched at all kinds of angles, and with still a certain picturesque attractiveness. But successive generations had covered the whole of the gardens with flimsily built tenements, blocking out the light and air, and, by neglecting to keep the houses in repair and a proper state of sanitation, creating an undoubted slum. In 1925 the Corporation had been moved to destroy the whole area by the cutting of new streets and building blocks of dwellings. This would have involved the destruction of the few remaining Elizabethan buildings, and the matter was taken up by some local enthusiasts. I was asked to help, with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. It was soon found that the slum question dominated the situation. The proposal to clear was abandoned because of the great cost and heavy burden on the rates it would have involved; because it would have been impossible to rehouse the 1,300 people living on the site in the new buildings, the lowest rentals in which would be 12s. 6d. per week, whereas the average rents paid by the existing tenants, fishermen, fish-hawkers, coastal seamen, pilots and the like—who all pick up their living along the seashore and would be unable

to do so if moved away—was less than 5s.; and because of the enormous cost of the clearance scheme. These considerations led to the scheme of reconditioning.

The staying of the scheme of demolition, which occupied a year, was, however, only the removal of our first difficulty. The next was that the Ministry of Health had been in the habit of contributing to the cost only where there was a complete clearance of the site. It took another year to obtain a conditional promise of national help to a scheme of reconditioning, but that was eventually done. The accretions have been removed, the open spaces restored, and the old houses repaired and sanitated. Here and there buildings too far gone to retain have been pulled down, and new small dwellings, similar in type to those which remain, are being built on the sites. The whole scheme has necessarily been undertaken by the Corporation. Part of the work they have carried out themselves, and part the owners have carried out. It will involve some charge upon the rates, even after the State contribution, but nothing like what would have resulted from a wholesale clearance, and it is resulting in the district retaining, after the reduction of overcrowding, a large proportion of its inhabitants and becoming at least a hundred per cent. healthier than before.

I fear that cases where slum property could be acquired in the open market and dealt with by private enterprise, so as to make a profit, as has been affirmed, are not usual if the area is to be made available for the rehousing of the occupants at such rents as they could pay—an essential condition. It would do no good to recondition and perhaps partially rebuild a slum, find tenants who could pay the higher rents necessary, and leave the original slum dwellers to flow into and overcrowd neighbouring districts. On the other hand, the action of local authorities, assisted by the State in schemes of clearance, which the Government apparently have in contemplation, must be expensive and slow in operation. Public utility societies formed for the purpose and enlisting support, financial and otherwise, from the authorities, represent the most hopeful way of supplementing official handling of the situation, but I should anticipate little return beyond a very moderate rate of interest upon the capital employed. Part of the satisfaction of those embarking on such matters must, in most cases, be that of humanitarian sentiment, and not of purely business considerations.

Whether that be so or not, reconditioning by the private enterprise of individuals and bodies, or by public bodies, or by a combination of the two, must be an essential element in any attempt to overcome the evil. A recent case in which a court of law appeared to doubt the legality of a local authority selling or leasing property compulsorily acquired for such purpose, seems to open up a prospect of difficulties. But if the Government were in earnest that need not long stand in the way.

THESE "IDEALS"

BY A. P. HERBERT

THIS Christmas there will be a lot of talk about "ideals." All the year there has been a lot of talk about "ideals." And next year—what with the Naval Disarmament Conference, and the Imperial Conference, and the Fourth Imperial Press Conference, and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald still Prime Minister(?)—there will be a lot more. It may be well, therefore, to consider what one means by "ideals" and "idealism."

We do not mean, anyhow (at least, I do not mean, for I know nothing about it) all that muck the philosophers talk about, the "introspective movement," "*cogilo ergo sum*," and so forth. I am talking about the things referred to as idealism by public speakers at banquets, and many Americans at cocktail-time, and all professional Socialists always. And what the devil is that? A young woman of my acquaintance, whose Christian name is Topsy, remarked long ago that "what I never understand about ideals is that whatever anybody else feels strongly is *ideals* but whatever I feel strongly is *girlish folly* or the *Modern Young*." And for once, I do believe, the girl was right.

The word, like many other words, has been captured and corrupted and done to death. I do not grieve for it, for it was a vile young word from its birth. But there it is—it now means little more than a strongly held belief: and, as a rule, it means no more than a prejudice or bee in the bonnet. The ghastly thing is—I have a horrid fancy that *I am an idealist myself*! And the second ghastly thing is that none of the people who talk about ideals at public banquets would admit that I was an idealist (supposing wildly that they knew anything about me). They would call me a materialist, and worse names than that.

"Materialist." At once you see what a fog we are in. I fly to my 'Encyclopædia Britannica' and there I read that idealism is "*a term generally used for the attitude of mind which is prone to represent things in an imaginative light and to lay emphasis exclusively or primarily on abstract perfection*." Well, then, I hope we are all idealists. For myself, I certainly tend to represent things in an imaginative light, and I am all in favour of abstract perfection. I should like to see perfect peace and perfect love, and the perfect woman, general prosperity and happiness, and War Loan at par. But what Prohibitionist would grant that I possessed the tiniest germ of an ideal?

I venture to write in defence of public-houses and the use of wine: for liberty is one of my "ideals," and "moderation" is another, and you cannot be moderate when you are not at liberty to exceed. I aim at the "abstractly perfect" man who will be able to face all temptation without exceeding, to stroll about Eden with never a fall. And is not that a nobler ideal than the imperfect man shut up in a vacuum and itching to get out? I prefer St. Anthony to Mr. Hoover. If words are used strictly it is the Prohibitionists who are the "materialists," not I. For I am thinking of the soul of man, and they of the body. I wish him to be tried in the fires of liberty and emerge triumphant and perfect in spirit; they talk of nothing but cirrhosis of his liver, of the money he will save and the motor-cars he will be able to buy. Idealists? I call them gross.

Then I have other "ideals." I detest, as most of us do, cruelty to animals, and I hate the taking of life for pleasure. Being a sensible man, and not a true idealist, I know that animal life must be taken, and I squash my beetle and eat my bird like the rest of us: I will accept my grouse or salmon from any man. But I should hate to kill the creatures myself and I cannot understand the people who habitually go about killing them for fun, day after day. I see all the pictorial attraction of fox-hunting and all the fine qualities of fox-hunters: but that to me is, shall I say, an unintelligible pastime. In a state of "abstract perfection" as I imagine it, these things would not be done.

But I recognize that my views upon this subject are unimportant, and even unusual. And, therefore, I do not obtrude them when I stay, as I sometimes do, with people in the country whose principal pleasure is killing animals. I do not do as Rome

does, but I do not throw stones at Rome while I am Rome's guest. That means, you may say, that I am not a sensible man but a humbug. And I may say that I am in the position of the Prohibitionist who provides wine for his guests. But it does not matter two hoots what you or I say about that. The interesting point is this: I have friends who are both Prohibitionists and fox-hunters—a strange combination, but it is so. But if I suggested that my objection to killing for fun was on the same plane as their objection to drinking for fun, they would not understand what I meant; they would think I was raving. I have a childish affection for rabbits: and in my poor judgment it is a far more ignoble thing for a rich man to take his children out into the fields with dogs and ferrets and chivvy the rabbits about for fun, than it is for a poor man to go to his pub and drink too much beer. I should never say that to the rich man, for he would never understand me: so what's the use? Besides, I like him and he is as well entitled to his opinions and pleasures as I am to mine. But there it is—about drinking he is an "idealist": and, about killing, he would call me a "crank." Now isn't that odd?

I am afraid the truth is that "idealists" are generally "cranks." That is not necessarily a condemnation: for cranks, whatever people say, do get things done. That curious Mr. Willett, who wanted to do something ridiculous with our clocks, called Daylight Saving, was doubtless a "crank" when he said it for the first time: so, I expect, was a Mrs. Pankhurst, who wanted women to have votes: and so, I dare say, was a Mr. Wilberforce, who objected to slavery: so, I know, is that absurd Mr. Herbert, who would go on and on about dear Sir William Joynson Hicks and is still going on about the water-buses on the Thames. We are all cranks about something, and as long as we don't call it "idealism" we shall do no great harm and give little offence. Even the degraded Conservatives believe strongly in something; and, therefore, the Prime Minister must not go on making speeches about ideals as if he had cornered the market in the things and was not proposing to sell.

America, of course, reeks of ideals. It was "ideals" that shut the American out of the saloons: and I have no doubt that we shall soon hear that it was ideals that drove him to Wall Street. Mr. Hoover and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald may be described, I suppose, as sister flag-ships in the fleets of idealism: and their idea of "abstract perfection" is a condition of things in which the two countries have ten battleships only, all as like as two eggs, and carrying toy guns of identical dimensions. To me it seems supremely unimportant how many more ships America has: what does disturb me is the number of films America sends us. Mr. MacDonald, with his ideals, would hate to think of a Scotsman smuggling whisky into the United States; and I, with mine, am shocked by some of the talkies which are being openly imported into England. There, again, I am thinking of the mind and spirit and soul of my country, and Mr. MacDonald is thinking merely of the bodies of the Americans. Yet he is an idealist and I am not. Isn't it odd?

And then, what are we to make of an idealist like the great Mr. Snowden, who thinks it immoral to tax betting but gets the greatest satisfaction out of taxing beer: or the idealist who would give more and more responsibility to the man in the street but less and less to the man in the pub: or the idealist like myself who would have more liberty for everyone, but not for motorists?

I am as bad as the rest of them, no doubt: and so, I expect, are you. And perhaps the less we all use this vague and detestable word, the better.

MARIONETTES IN MUNICH

BY GERALD BULLETT

IF the English Christmas is very English—the invention, we are told, of a very English novelist—it is also, I fancy, very German; for nothing could have been more like a Christmas party than the happy gathering I chanced upon, one summer's day, in the Von der Tann Strasse, Munich. Outside, the world blazed with sunlight; but here, in the dim interior of the little Marionette Theatre, we could hardly believe that there was not snow on the ground. Indeed, so powerful was the spell wrought upon me by expectation that in fancy I heard the sound of sledge-bells coming from a wintry distance, and half-thought to see enter, in a little while, the genial saint whom we all, English and Germans, call by the same name. It was an afternoon show, sparsely attended; but the audience consisted almost entirely of children, and this Christmas party atmosphere warmed my heart and tricked me into feeling no more than ten years old. The children made a great noise, scraping their feet, chattering. Now and again the programme-man barked them into momentary silence. Indignation, however, would be misdirected if directed at him, for he quite evidently possessed the kind heart that all gruff men have in light fiction; and compassion, anyhow, would be wasted on these children, who resumed their complicated and noisy activities thirty seconds or so after being hushed into silence.

Soon, a well-thumped piano announced that something was going to happen. What was going to happen, as I saw from my programme, was nothing less than the "moralische Komödie in 3 Aufzügen" entitled 'Kasperl als Prinz.' And—yes, the curtain goes up and there is Kasperl himself, the jolly roystering buffoon, the comic Everyman, the perennial butt, and, with it all, a great favourite and a universal hero of folklore. There is a bit of Punch in him and a bigger bit of Tyl Ulenspiegel. He is a symbol of something primitive, riotous and enduring, in the folk character, something fierce and free that survives all government. Anyhow, here he is in his cottage, to which, and to his exasperated wife, he has just returned, drunk as a lord. The phrase is prophetic, for in his drunken stupor he is presently transported, like Christopher Sly, to the palace of a prince, and wakes to find himself in the midst of the most astonishing splendour and the object of the most astonishing solicitude. It is the prince himself who has planned the joke: he is brilliant in red, and his chief attendant equally brilliant in green; their voices and their bearing are just what you would expect, only more so; for it is the special quality of this robust and charming art that it presents everything in caricature. They are haughty, as befits their station, despite the fact that they are pretending to be Kasperl's servants; but they are nothing like so haughty, it seems to me, as their own flunkys are. And this is so precisely and subtly as it should be that I wonder if I have merely imagined the distinction. Butlers and footmen made of wood and worked by strings are more than life-like: they put out of countenance the merely real butlers and footmen who can only try to be wooden. As for Kasperl himself, he is the liveliest rascal that ever footed the boards.

Indeed, these puppets can be marvellously expressive: not only more amusing, but on occasion positively more moving, than actors of flesh and blood. For here, so far as the visual effect is concerned, there is no interpolated personality between ourselves and the drama as it exists in the dramatist's mind. Instead of seeing Mr. H. Chelsea Smith, the well-known actor and clubman, pretending to be Lord Godfrey Maltravers or the Archbishop of Ruritania, we see a doll

—surprisingly active but with no irrelevant personal mannerisms of its own—which it is agreed shall stand for this or that personage. The author puts words into its mouth, and the puppet-master provides it with a set of conventional gestures. These are enough: the rest of the work is ours. All art is a collaboration between the artist and ourselves, and the higher the art-form the greater, up to a certain point, is the share required of us. Puppetry, but for one technical disability, is the ideal medium for drama, being suggestive, not vulgarly literal, and beautifully free from obstructive irrelevances. But while the mind's eye delightedly accepts it, the mind's ear sometimes remains unconvinced; in the present stage of the technique there is always the fatal possibility of our failing to make the necessary association between the doll that struts its hour upon the stage and the voice that speaks for it. Inevitably there is a disproportion between volume and size. In this disproportion there is, perhaps, symbolic irony, a subtle, if accidental, comment on human life; but that it is sometimes enough to destroy the illusion is an unmitigated disaster. Nevertheless, I should like to see 'Hamlet' as a marionette play—I wish Mr. Gordon Craig would arrange it for me.

While I indulge in these ruminations Kasperl is capering on the stage, exuberantly pleased, surprised, autocratic, angry, gay—indeed, every mortal emotion that is fit material for comedy seems to come his way. Finally, he is persuaded to sleep, and, having been borne home by the prince's minions, wakes in his own humble cottage and tells his wife with an infinite variety of gesture what an enchanting dream he has had. After this extraordinarily pregnant parable we have 'Die drei Wünsche,' under which thin disguise even I who have next to no German can recognize that familiar trinity, The Three Wishes. This is the story of the woodcutter to whom appears "die schöne Fee Zimmerimimba" and offers him three wishes. Now this scene is pure magic; it achieves the impossible, because it gives us the fairyland of our childhood's imagination. Where fairies are in question, the marionette show has every other art beaten to a standstill.

This conviction was sustained next day when, in an older establishment, situated in the Blumenstrasse, I saw a full-length version of 'Rumpelstiltskin.' There was once, let me tell you (for I am sure you have forgotten the story), a poor miller who had a very beautiful daughter. She was a clever wench, or at least was believed so by her father, who, one day, in conversation with the king of that country, declared that she could spin gold out of straw. Seeing at once the usefulness of such a gift the king ordered her to be brought to him. "Now my girl," said the king, "here is a spinning wheel, and here, as you see, is a wagon-load of straw. All this straw must be spun into gold before morning, as you value your life." And, though the poor girl cried out that she could do no such thing, she was locked up in the spinning-room and left to make good her father's boast. This scene, as presented by Herr Schmid in the Blumenstrasse, is delightful. The miller's daughter is in despair: she sits disconsolate on her stool, resolved, it would appear, to wait for morning and for the death that morning will bring to her. But now the most exciting thing happens. The straw at her feet begins to move and rustle, as though a mouse were hidden there; and in a few seconds there emerges, no mouse, but a tiny troll, a top-heavy little swaggering fellow with a fine fierce beard. "And what's your trouble, my good lass?" says the troll sharply. I assure you it is a superb moment. The children's excited silence is intoxicating.

By now you will have begun to remember the story you knew in your childhood: how this midget of a man spins gold from the straw (we see him doing it:

there is no room for doubt), and how, after a series of such benefactions, he bargains with her for her first child. And the king marries her. But she, when her child is born, chooses to forget her promise; and is surprised and indignant (of course she is!) when the midget suddenly appears and demands its fulfilment. She works upon him with her lamentations and entreaties, so that at last he says: "I will give you three days' grace, and if when I return you can tell me my name you shall keep your child. If not—" And when the time is nearly up, in comes friend Kasperl, the comic lout in her father the miller's service, with the story of what he has seen and heard (we saw and heard it, too) in the forest: which, you will readily believe, was no less than a midget dancing in front of his midget house and singing:

Merrily the feast I'll make,
To-day I'll brew, to-morrow bake;
Merrily I'll dance and sing,
For next day will a stranger bring.
Little does my lady dream
Rumpelstiltskin is my name!

And so the miller's daughter keeps her baby instead of her word; and Rumpelstiltskin, who with all his magic isn't clever enough to think of cheating, gets nothing for his pains but ridicule. . . . And what could be better than that for a Christmas entertainment?

PAPER CAPS FOR CHRISTMAS

By A. A. MILNE

FIGHTING SPIRIT HABITUALLY SHOWN BY CHAMELEON

(To—)

When comrades told him all was lost,
Save honour, bravely he replied:
"Fight on!" and, counting not the cost,
Fought on the other side.

ACTIVITY ON THE CHELSEA FRONT

(To—)

He who has genius often will abuse it—
Were you a Genius, we could be forgiving;
Were you a Charlatan, why, we'd excuse it—
Charlatans must do *something* for a living;
But since it's plain you're neither one nor t'other,
Why all these stunts, dear Brother?

THE INEVITABLE

(To—)

They praised you much when you were young,
But now they only damn.
Cheer up; for every sheep that's hung
Was petted as a lamb.

TWO FISHERMEN

(To—)

He came to the gate, and he knocked "Rat-tat,"
Peter opened, and said, "Who's that?"
"Oh, wait a moment," and Peter took
Particulars down in his big black book.
"Philosopher, writer, journalist,
"Conservative"—anything else we've missed?
"Don't be afraid of talking shop—
"Books keep selling? That's 'Author (pop.).'
"Well, now, 'Conservative'—looks quite nice,
"But couldn't we try to be more precise?

"Say, 'Not too fond of the lower classes'?"
"Say, 'Some of 'em knaves and the rest of 'em asses'?"
"In she goes in the Book, which brings
"Us down to Hobbies and Games and things.
"Anything else you do or like—
"Dining? Cricketing? Ride a bike?
"Stamp-collecting, or—see what I mean? . . .
"Right, I'll make a note of it. 'Dean.'"

DIALECTICS WEEKLY

(To—)

There are writers who convince me; when they've
put their point of view,
They have made it fairly certain that it's my opinion
too.
There are others who convince me in another kind
of way—
They convince me of the *opposite* of anything they
say.
But you belong to neither class, you leave me as I am;
I do not laud the things you praise, nor praise the
things you damn.
For you just convince me firmly by the arguments
you weave
You could make as good a case out for the things
you *don't* believe.

MOVEMENT IN THE GRAVE OF MRS. SIDDONS

(To—)

Why do you tell us how you wash your face,
And how "Pomponsa" cleans the pores inside
And gives the cheeks their fresh and rounded
grace?—

Have you no pride?

Why do you tell us all about your skin,
And why we ought to ask for what's-its-name,
And "take a greasy rag and rub it in"?—

Have you no shame?

SECOND CLASS

(To—)

Third Class is frightened to think, so he thinks
aloud,
When he's made quite sure that he thinks with the
rest of the crowd.

And *Second* is eager to think, but his mind is blurred
By the terrible thought that perhaps he will think
like *Third*.

But *First* doesn't think of the others. He thinks at
his ease.
And *Second* and *Third* may think what they damn
well please.

DULL AFTERNOON AT ASSIZES

(To—)

The quality of mercy was not strained,
It dropped as the gentle dew from Heaven
Into your hands. Distilled as years it rained
In multiples of 2 and 5 and 7
(Long years, slow years) upon each sullen head
That bowed beneath your cool, ascetic look—
You: Justice, blind, inhuman, honoured;
He: One more malefactor brought to book;
Not Man and Man, who once were Child and Child,
Who will be Dust and Dust, but Bench and Dock—
And those long years were somehow reconciled
With the slow ticking of the court-room clock. . . .
Our Judges hardly ever take to drink.
They would, however, if they stopped to think.

THE ADVENT

BY EDMUND BLUNDEN

THE leaves fluttering down have now outnumbered their companions in the starlight, the moths; and several days have passed since we saw the bat vanish from the springing light of morning. The mushrooms, which leapt up under trees and out in the meadow with their peculiar determination, suddenly ceased, as though the calendar had to be observed; not the weather, for a calmer current of nature gliding into the hard season could scarcely be imagined in England. A mossy greenness still extends through the pastures, except where the moles have been working under such agreeable conditions. The violets in the orchard grass agree that the year is gentle. Above our walk, the appearances of old age are sharper against the watery blue. Enormous colonies of mistletoe, almost like brushwood faggots, are seen now on the less accessible timbers. In the walnut tree one sees lodged several "batts," but they and the winds have knocked down the last nut, and the rats have hurried all that fell, when no one was looking, into their interstices of the farmhouse.

We shall hear soon how many sackfuls of walnut-shells were found when the war on these rats broke out. It is a little curious that the rat does not acquire a taste for crab-apples, which he could have in such cartloads along the channel of the brook. But he has no encouragement from the rest of the parish. If there is a god of wild apples, I think that he must have the patience possible to celestial beings. Annually he makes the hedgerow bright and odorless with his healthy fruit, and annually the harvest is scorned.

In the yellow and the silver light, towards the early sunset, the site of a mansion where, as everyone for miles knows, centuries of wealth and high spirit passed, begins to look more measurable. The insolence of summer growths, that made a jungle where there had been chapel, and courtyard, and painted corridor, is nearly gone. The true ruin appears, and the principal personalities of the natural contest over property. It is singular that when that all-haunting ghost Elizabeth was the "most high mightie and magnificent Empresse," gilding our drowsy countryside with her progress of 1578, the owner here chose to entertain her eye with a sculpture, representing a broad-nosed, hairy, leaf-clad man of the woods, armed with a club. This effigy stood his ground until the nineteenth century, and was then removed; but his phantasmal prototype has persisted. The wooden club has been wielded, and the shaggy outlawry has fastened on the place. Winter, with bitter candour, shows the grasp and muscle of the monster.

No devil-fish ever cast his tentacles round a fisherman as these brown trees, now distinct and numbered, have lashed their roots round the great brick and stone bases, or driven them through and in and out in a cold passion. Here, they have thrust the masonry aside, and blocked the moat; there, they have balanced it to suit their purpose, and will not be divided from it in their death. The moat, that once reflected gay costumes, now shines with the tints of their lost leaves, except where the still rich red of the wall is mirrored.

An empty wren's nest under these iron-sinewed roots, a flapping pigeon, a moorhen lying low—these give some tenderness to what is a battlefield. Even battlefields have room for homes.

Winter in the country increases the intimacies. Go to the market-town on a hot summer's day, and the bricks and pavements ignore you. The colours of the shop-windows, the qualities and allurements

of their contents, have only the interest of necessity. You wish to be cool, for example—it is a negative sort of ambition, and does not produce a variety of ideas or a lingering joy in the achieving. But, with winter, there is a sprightliness in the visit to the market and in the business—no, the recreation—of making the round of the shops. The hunt is up. The labourers who are out among the root-crops seem doubly unfortunate, while you spin along to the now beckoning roofs of the town. You pass even the barracks and wood-yards with a heartiness, and when the lamps are lighted and the faces of shopkeepers and customers are seen everywhere, the huge night overhead is forgotten. You hear louder voices, you see more inns in winter. Solidity of clothes, provisions, and handshakes surrounds you, and simplifies trouble in evidencing the worth of humanity. You cast longing eyes on corduroy jackets, or sides of bacon, and are pleased that the homeward bus is crammed with your fellow-beings and their bundles.

Those windless valleys where it is always lawn-tennis weather, the property of the idyllic poets, ought really to be provided with a winter quarter. I should not object violently to posthumous residence among their serene blossoms, with a view of Ventnor or the Inland Sea under the best arrangements. But I should ask for more. A driving rain, a flickering light along the puddled street, a sound of bells on the gust, the church windows gleaming, and the inner jubilation of the organ—let us have that luxury. The empty ploughlands drowned in howling night—and the chairs drawn round the fire—who would resign that? No deathless service of water-melons and zephyrs will do instead:

O! when the growling winds contend, and all
The sounding forest fluctuates in the storm,
To sink in warm repose, and hear the din
Howl o'er the steady battlements, delights
Above the luxury of vulgar sleep.

Standing on that shattered rampart just now, I thought of other ramparts, and winters which can never be excelled for accumulated ferocity. Those who would find the antipodes to all pleasures in pains may picture the soldier dragging his swollen feet through the slush, past the last ruin, with its last emblem, the hearth, sodden with sleet or rain, into a houseless place of ordeal. "For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn," unless they are extremely lucky. The lucky ones were not ungrateful. The Convent cellars in Ypres, in the winter of 1916, witnessed some courageous comradeship, defying winter and war in an atmosphere of wood-smoke. The slime of the winter after that was powerless to stop the survivors from making their way to the market-town, in the old spirit, at the first opportunity. The winter after that, with its sudden dislocating relaxation of the strain, found us still making believe that by such journeys we were winning the homeliness and life of former times, although the white wine was by this time mere acid, and the bars of soap which stood in the dreary, splashed windows of prostituted towns were scarcely festive, or a cure for rheumatism.

The pale light of a mild winter afternoon, which touches a forlorn scene so aptly in its true condition, has rested on many ruins, and identified us with them in a strange degree. It may be merely fancy, or an accident of associations; but I would trace a relation between this spirit, rather than light, and the decline of places. In this sympathetic crystal, so transient, I look at this grove that was a house, and naturally find the scene transformed into far-off wounded towers, and ramparts, and colonnades of trees, and red loopholed roofs, standing alone among unpeopled marshy plains, towards the winter evening of their friendly and intimate lives.

A BACHELOR DINNER

A SHORT STORY

BY MARTIN ARMSTRONG

LANCELOT SWAN sat waiting at the little corner table for two. Carlo, the waiter, had tipped the other chair forward against the table because Lancelot had told him that he was expecting a lady. The hour of appointment was eight and it was still only five to eight. Lancelot had come early; of course he had come early. Not that it was likely that she would come before the hour: no woman had ever been known to do that. More likely ten minutes late. But, anyhow, sooner or later, she would appear round the screen that hid the door, and hurry down the room with that enchanting mincing little walk of hers, darting birdlike glances at the tables till with a sudden lighting up of her face she would identify him. A delicious nervousness came over him at the thought of her coming. In five minutes—a quarter of an hour at the latest—she would be sitting in that chair opposite him. It was almost incredible.

How exquisitely fresh these situations still were. He had known one, two, three . . . well, anyhow, five or six of them, and he felt still as he had felt when he first fell in love at the age of nineteen. Yes, he was in love again, not a doubt of it. He recognized the familiar symptoms. Life had become once more a delicate and vivid thing.

Lancelot rather fancied himself as a lover. His technique, especially in the earlier stages, was beautifully subtle. In the present case he had just reached the stage of allowing Sylvia Trent to know positively that he was in love with her. In his recent meetings with her he had dropped occasional hints, the kind of hint that it was thrilling to drop and so thrilling, he ventured to believe, to pick up. And then, yesterday, he had made the thing suddenly explicit by writing her a letter, one of his delightfully whimsical yet unmistakably serious letters which, when he was in the mood, he could turn to perfection. He had read it over several times before putting it into its envelope and at each reading it had seemed better than before. Yes, it was a damned good bit of work: he wished afterwards that he had kept a copy.

He glanced at his watch. It was a minute past eight. She would be here at any moment now. At any moment round the corner of that screen. . . . His heart fluttered at the mere thought. He began to study the menu. It would be better not to be staring down the room when she arrived; one should not, in the earlier stages, give an impression of over-eagerness. He would let her discover him. Besides, it was always advisable to read through the menu beforehand, so as to be able to suggest things. It avoided the risk of those desolating indecisions. *Hors-d'œuvres* or grape-fruit; and then, perhaps, some cold consommé, always very good here. After that trout, *truite de rivière*, or a mayonnaise of langouste. Then, of course, there was the wine. Women always choose white. A pity, because he felt rather like a nice claret this evening—that Léoville-Barton he had had last time. However, it was for Sylvia to choose, not for him. He stared at the wine list vaguely, forgetting to read the items. Surely, he thought to himself suddenly, he had been waiting a long time. He looked at his watch. Seventeen minutes past. Really, seventeen minutes was a bit thick. Damn women. He took up the wine list again. "Léoville-Barton, 1917," that was it. But no, Sylvia would, of course, choose white. A Chablis would be rather nice, if one could be sure of getting real Chablis. He

turned the pages. "Chablis: La Moutonne." But would it really be La Moutonne? It ought to be, at that price. He browsed distractedly through the other wines, glanced at Spirits, Liqueurs, Cocktails, and then suddenly began staring at the screen that hid the door. It was too much of a good thing. Half an hour late, if you please. There was simply no decency in women. With a resentful scowl he began to scrutinize everyone who came round the screen. Well, he would let her see, when she did come, that he was annoyed. If she imagined she could do as she liked simply because he had admitted that he was in love, well, she'd come to the wrong man, that was all. "Lance, whatever must you think of me?" "Well, I'd rather not say, in the presence of a lady." Yes, that would be rather good; said with a touch of sourness, just to show her that he wasn't exactly joking. Joking, indeed! He had never in his life felt less like joking. He could hardly believe now, as he glowered at the screen, that each woman that came in was still not her. Each woman that wasn't her now was, for Lancelot, one more unit added to the sum of Sylvia's unforgivable sin. For to keep a friend waiting was, among decent people, the deadliest of sins. It implied so much. Bad manners, disregard for the feelings of others, and a kind of scatter-brained incompetence, lack of self-organization, a failing Lancelot particularly disliked. He caught the waiter's eye. The waiter smiled. No doubt he was amused, damn him. Well, no wonder he was amused, for she had certainly made a fine fool of him. Besides, he was hungry, damned hungry.

He ordered a cocktail, and she had better keep away, now, till he had had it. As he was now, he would be barely civil to her. He would give her till a quarter to nine. Or . . . should he ring up and find out what the deuce had happened? No, he would not ring her up. No fear. Ten years ago he would have gone gibbering to the telephone in a panic, but he knew better nowadays. Nothing ever had happened on these occasions; that is, nothing excusable. And then, of course, to ring up and display concern was always to give a woman one up on you. No, he wasn't going to start worrying about her. Not likely. Especially on an empty stomach. If there was going to be any telephoning or worrying, she would have to do it. After all, it was up to her.

The waiter brought his cocktail and he drank half of it at a gulp. A—h, that was better. It slid down, deliciously cold, and settled, a little tingling clot, in the centre of his perfectly empty inside. Yes, by heaven, as empty as a blown egg. He sent the second half to follow the first, and a small remote sunrise of consolation flushed the darkness within. Lancelot sat staring at the empty glass. He had given up watching the screen now. He roused himself and glanced at his watch once again. A quarter to nine. Time up.

And yet, what was he to have? He didn't feel he could face anything now. A mug's game, eating alone in a restaurant: everyone else with a companion, cheerful and chattering. Oh, damn it all, and he had looked forward to such an enchanting evening. Because she *was* enchanting, the cursed little rat: there was no good denying it. Should he go away, go to his club? If he thought she would come now, he would go, just to let her come and find him gone. But obviously she wasn't coming: besides, it was too late, now, to go anywhere else. And he wasn't going to do without his dinner, by God no. No, he was going to stay where he was, and have a damned fine meal into the bargain. He raised a finger. "Carlo, I'll begin. And I want something very nice: I'm in a bad temper."

The waiter nodded indignantly. "I believe it, sir. Smoked salmon, sir?"

"Yes, an excellent idea. Smoked salmon with a little brown bread and butter. But bring me another dry Martini first."

A second Martini on a perfectly empty stomach would poison that small gnawing mouse of disappointment. When it came, Lancelot drank it straight off. There! He felt as right as rain. Wonderful things, cocktails. Sylvia could stay where she was, now. However, she was doing that in any case, it seemed. With a sigh of relief he settled down to the smoked salmon. Well, the waiting had given him a magnificent appetite, there was no doubt about that. A blessing in disguise. "My dear Sylvia, I don't want to be rude, but it was a blessing in disguise. Really."

"And what to follow, sir? Fish. Œufs Brouillés?"

"H'm!" Lancelot reflected. "No, I should like some sort of entrée. Something . . . unusual."

"There is *Perdreau Vendangeuse*. *Partreech* cooked with grapes. Very good."

Lancelot raised his hand and nodded. "That's it," he said. "The very thing."

"With, perhaps, a little fried salsify?"

"With fried salsify."

A little spasm of joy swept through him. "A young partridge to oneself, and cooked in that delicious way, too. A thing to work on at slowly and absorbedly, dissecting it knowingly, seeking out deftly those exquisite morsels known only to those that know. And nobody—thank God, *nobody*—to bother one with talk. The wine waiter came for his order and suddenly Lancelot's heart leapt, suddenly he realized. *He would be able to have the Léoville-Barton* after all. It was providential, nothing short of providential. And how admirably it would go with partridge; the glass held to one's nose first, to savour the wonderful bouquet, and then slowly drunk, mouthful by mouthful between the mouthfuls of partridge. And no damned woman—praise Heaven, no damned woman—to distract one.

Oblivious of time and his surroundings Lancelot pursued his delicate labour till the partridge was reduced to a clean skeleton, a wrecked schooner in miniature left high and dry on a perfect circle of porcelain beach. Lancelot sighed. A wonderful dish; and the Claret, even more delicious than he had remembered it to be. He refused cheese or an ice; they would profane the wine, and he sat finishing it.

"I can gif you a very nice piece of melon," said Carlo into his ear. "I show you." He darted away and returned with a green, deeply grooved melon, the inside of it yellow as the yolk of an egg and filled with chopped ice. Yes, O most certainly, that was too inviting to be refused.

The melon tasted like the scent of a flower. Then coffee, cognac, and a cigar, and plenty of time to smoke it. No fear of having to get up and go when it was only half smoked and ruin the enjoyment of it.

"I hope, sir," said the waiter, bending over Lancelot, as he presented the bill, "that you have forgiven her."

"Forgiven her? Forgiven whom?"

"The lady, sir." He pointed to the empty chair.

Lancelot threw back his head. "Bless my soul, I'd forgotten all about her. Forgiven? I should hope so. I was never so grateful to anyone in my life."

"Yes, positively grateful," he muttered to himself a little fiercely as he emerged into the street. "Thank you, Sylvia; thank you, my dear, for an absolutely faultless little dinner."

THE WALKIES

BY GERALD GOULD

MY brilliant article (forgive the apparent egotism of the epithet: it is a mere conventional phrase: articles are brilliant as acts are rash and scandals alleged)—my brilliant article then, on motoring, has brought me thousands of congratulatory letters from all classes of the community (forgive me again: it is my pen that insists on writing like this: when letters come, they come not single spies, but in battalions; and classes, like ripeness, are all); and I have been asked, though only by my own muse, to put with equal subtlety and chastity of phrase the case for pedestrians, of whom there are still some.

There are still some, even though the title be used in its strictest sense, and one speak only of them that normally and of purpose travel on their feet. A writer in *The Times* has properly pointed out that motorists themselves pedestrate occasionally: they have to get from the car-park to the club: yet once, when I had been pleading that man should remember his possession of two feet, a north country commentator pinned me down with: "One for the clutch and one for the accelerator." The classes—all classes of the community—have their vague margins and debatable lands: you can scarcely lift a foot without troubling of a car: and it must not be said of any man that he is wholly bad or wholly virtuous, a walker or a driver altogether. Still, though there may be objects of which it is hard to determine whether they are chairs or tables, the essential difference remains: we sit on these, at those: when I say "pedestrian," I mean "walker," jay or lay.

There is, or so I fondly dream, a Bill before Parliament for the protection and promotion of pedestrians. The compulsory rear-light is already conceded in principle; discussion will rage rather round such contentious clauses as removal of the slowness-limit and incidence of tax. The abolition of dogs and children is, I understand, to be moved in Committee.

In my own view, the subject has been allowed to fall into a disgraceful confusion. Politicians talk as if pedestrians were all of one kind, fit only to be herded and massacred, or labelled and saved, in one place. But it is precisely the difference of place that matters. The use of feet should certainly be forbidden within seven miles of Charing Cross, and in the main districts of Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow and other populous cities. But, honestly, I do not see why people should not walk in lanes or on downs; and, far from the noise of wheels, I would not even make it a heavily-punishable offence to be drunk in charge of your feet.

It takes all sorts—all classes of the community, if I may adapt a phrase—to make a world. And there is one sort which shall not be allowed, if I can help it, to die unwept. I refer to those persons who walk intentionally and romantically, not to get from here to there, but to exalt the heart and cleanse the spirit. I see them sometimes still, as I go clanking my foolish way down lanes to whose loveliness (out of consideration for pedestrians) I must not lift my eyes. There is something about them old-world and fugitive, something with the tang of first youth and early love. See this couple—two young men set free from the drudgery of shop and office, or possibly undergraduates recruiting their health after the almost incredible labours of the University of Oxford and the much more credible labours of the University of Cambridge. Their shirts are open at the neck, Saleeby-salubrious. If they glance nervously over their shoulders, retrorse-anticipatory of wheeled assault: if they are forced to share the very air with fumes of oil and petrol—yet the half-open road still rings beneath their feet, and the world is partly before

An article by Mr. Hilaire Belloc will appear in next week's issue.

them where to tread. They carry sticks and knapsacks. Familiar volumes peep shyly from their capacious pockets. They have, at least in fancy, visioned the Sacred Grove, begun the Path to Rome—a Lucas *a non lucendo*, and Belloc yet to be.

Or, since these be modern days, and youth-movements prevail, and chaperones are forgotten, and man has discovered maid—the couple is more likely to be one of one and half-a-couple of the other. Bi-sexual, if you take my meaning. It was a lover and his lass—or two Platonic friends, in whom, nevertheless, neo-Platonism may yet be encouraged by propinquity—he, open at the throat as before, iron-shod, a reader of Masefield: she, kilted to the knee, or breeched: both, when they get the chance, drinkers of ale. They are doing the hey-nonni-no stuff; and I envy them. Time cannot cheapen that impulse, nor the juggernauts drive it under.

Arterial roads, and, indeed, all main roads, might reasonably be shorn of pedestrians. But there is likewise a wind—well, what I mean to say is, you can get away to lanes and loneliness. I know the haunts are more and more invaded: I know the habit is dying out: but there is something here not altogether dead. When I was young, I would go walking-tours in every weather, sometimes companioned, sometimes solitary. I would make poetry as I went, or remind my tranquil mind of the poetry of others. I was indifferent to rain: I have been glad of hail. I have walked towards the westering sun, and almost hushed the foolish clamour of the heart under that subduing drench of gold. I have found friendly towns in the evening. And there in the night. . . . but I suppose Morris becomes as unquotable as Borrow. I know not who has taken the place of either. But, anyhow, the morrow's uprising was always sweet enough, though one had to temper one's swollen feet with salt-and-water before a boot became bearable.

No doubt, there was suffered too much talking about walking. The Mug of Beer School overflowed into heartiness. There were false-hearted Literary Men, the pseudo-Path-to-Romers, who sat in Fleet Street and did jolly little essays on the Alps and the Cevennes. But since when has a creed been to be judged by its betrayers? A fact is a fact: and here are two facts. To walk in the right spirit was glorious: to go motor-touring in that spirit, though certainly not impossible, presents difficulties. So that we have not wholly gained by the worship of the wheel: and the thing we have partially lost possessed its reality. Even sentiment, or a sort of sentiment (it takes all sorts to make a world) can be defended. . . .

But that is another article.

THE POET'S WINTER

BY HUMBERT WOLFE

YOU shining company! there waits without the quiet rooms of heaven in the snow one who distraught by equal love and doubt now seeks to enter, and now turns to go.

He has heard you speaking gently from afar, and was drawn hither sweetly against his will, but scarce can see the window for the star, set like a lamp upon the window-sill.

Nor is it actual snow, though banked and driven against your door that holds him from the latch, but deeper drifts to music heaped in heaven than foot can measure or than time dare snatch.

Yet though benighted, wandered, and in storm, no need to bid him for an alms to enter, who walks in the mere shadow of song as warm as a lamb folded in a poet's winter.

THE OTHER CHRISTMAS

BY J. B. PRIESTLEY

I SEE them going back, dwindling and fading as they retreat in time, these Christmases that I have had, and as I strain my eyes, searching the dimming corridor of memory, I wonder which to chose, to recapture—for once it has been chosen I believe it can be recaptured. There was the year, now about a quarter of a century away, when I was given the football. That will do as well as any other. At first I can remember nothing but the football (I have always had a passion for footballs, and to this day cannot hear the *thud-thud* of one without a quickening of the heart), but gradually, other things return, one corner after another of the curtain is lifted, the light grows stronger, and the scene is vivid again. The football comes bouncing back, bringing with it a whole lost world.

On that Christmas morning, then, I awoke to find the grey light sneaking through my dormer window and the old magic at work, for at the foot of the bed was that delicious heaviness, that strange and enchanting bumpiness which only arrived once a year. My stockings, which were hanging over the bedrail, for that was our custom, were filled, as usual, but I had got past the age when the most important gifts could be crammed inside stockings. These bulged with oranges and chocolate and the like. But I think the shirt was tucked away in one of the stockings. It was a football shirt, of a happy, triumphant colouring, red and white stripes. If you are wondering what use a football shirt is to a boy if there are not ten other boys with similar shirts to hand, then you have no imagination. I would have preferred to have had ten other boys, all in red and white stripes, for football company, but I was quite prepared to be happy as the single representative, the nucleus, of a red and white team. On the other hand, the shirt would not be a success, would, indeed, be merely tantalizing, without a football. But the football was there, blown up, taut, trim and ready—and oh, the beauty of that firm but bouncing sphere, true symbol of our planetary life! I sat up in bed, the queer half-light of the December morning round me, caressing its leather sides, running my fingers up and down the seams. It was still very early, the house was hardly stirring yet, but very soon I would be bouncing it happily upon my bedroom floor. Meanwhile, I put it aside, very close to the shirt, and continued my treasure hunt.

There was, as usual, a book that year, and I can tell you what it was. It was 'The Triple Alliance,' by Harold Avery; and if you imagine that this was some boy who wished to become acquainted with European policy, then you are wrong. It was a school story. I have just looked up Mr. Avery in a reference book (and how astonishing it is to find him there, this magician from the distant past, just like the rest of us, plain scribblers!) and discover that he has written 'Play the Game,' 'Firelock and Steel,' 'True to His Nickname,' and a great many other stories, but nothing is said about 'The Triple Alliance.' But that was the name of my book, and he was its author. I was very fond of school stories in those days—Talbot Baines Reed was my man, though that was before I came to 'The Captain' and its more sophisticated authors—and I can remember how surprised I was to find that the boy next door, who went away to school, never had any of these adventures with bullies and town roughs and comic French masters and that his school was, on the whole, rather dull, considerably duller than mine. I was so fond of school stories that I used to write them myself, or, at least, I used to begin them. And they all began in the same way, I remember: "Hurrah!" cried Dick as the train came into the station. "Greyfriars at last!" That was

my opening formula or gambit, Dick to Greyfriars in one move. But that, I think, came a little later. Then I was still reading and not writing. I spent quite a considerable fraction of the holidays that year reading 'The Triple Alliance,' whole afternoons with it. How we could spin out books in those days!

When at last the time came to descend to breakfast, that Christmas morning, I was wearing my red and white striped football shirt. If it had been raining hard or snowing, I believe I should have burst with vexation, but fortunately it was doing neither, so five minutes after I had swallowed my last mouthful of cocoa I was dashing towards the field at the back of the house, carrying my football. No other boy was in sight, but that did not matter. For an hour I played football, leading a triumphant red and white team, all by myself. The grass was long and very wet—and now, as I write, I can see again the very glitter of its beaded blades—and it was a raw morning, but I was happy, and when at last another boy turned up, I was happier still. (His name was Victor; he afterwards went to Australia; and now I do not know whether he is alive or dead. Most of the boys I played with are dead, and not a few of them all died on the same day, July 1, 1916). The pair of us chased the soaking ball and happily booted the morning away. When I returned, muddy, with a football shirt that looked like a football shirt, to the house, it was already full of turkey and plum pudding, to say nothing of my aunts and my grandfather.

When my aunts and my grandfather came to the house, they always filled it at once, because they talked broad Yorkshire and talked it at the top of their voices. When I went to see them, at the other side of the town, I always sat in a corner, in a small rocking chair, and pored over 'Nicholas Nickleby' and 'David Copperfield,' both of which seemed to me then, I remember, books with a strange, dark, tragic atmosphere of their own, peopled with mysterious, sinister beings who crept in and out of the shadowy scenery of a dream. It was, I think, the illustrations and not the text, always a subordinate matter to a child, that gave me this idea of them. One half of my mind would be exploring fearfully this dream world of shadows and twisted faces, while the other half listened to the cheerful shouting of the adults. Some of my earliest memories are tangled up with the tall, bearded figure of my grandfather. I seem to have trotted miles by his side, hearing him talk to the other adults about house property, his favourite subject when out for a walk. "Nah, yon's a bit o' property that's just fetched nowt like what you'd ha' thowt it would," he would say, and I would go trotting along by his side, occasionally rewarded with a mint humbug, a kind of sweet to which we were extremely partial in Yorkshire. And I doubt if I remember anything earlier than his bringing me home once in a bus, one of the old horse buses. I fell asleep on his knee, for it was terribly late, terribly dark, but not before my mind seized hold of the little interior, the flickering oil lamps, the huge figures in two rows, and the straw on the floor, to keep it for ever, so that I have only to shut out this other world for a moment to see again, to smell again, the straw on the floor of that old horse bus.

After dinner, which we had in the middle of the day, I crept into a corner with 'The Triple Alliance,' and no doubt spent the whole afternoon, enjoying every minute of it, with the first chapter or so. I know that it was considerably later in the afternoon, perhaps after tea, when I went next door, where there was a boy of my own age, not Victor but another. His chief present had been a small engine, and this engine, which worked with a kind of smelly fury, could be made to print three ducks, three rather smudgy ducks but still quite recognizable ducks, on pieces of paper about half the size of a postcard. This is all the

machine could do, but we asked for nothing better. After collecting all the scrap paper in the house and trimming it to the right size, the two of us sat at a little table in the kitchen, set the engine going, and printed ducks, hundreds and hundreds of ducks. Ah, the grave ecstasies of boyhood and that enchanted season when you can print ducks, the same three ducks, by the hour and be happy!

It is strange how little has been lost. The football, pressed between my rapturous hands, seems to be here now; I remember the red stripes, the white stripes, the very texture, the woolly fluffiness, of that shirt: I catch again the glitter of the wet grass; Harold Avery's story is only round the corner; my grandfather is shouting across the dinner table; the kitchen next door is being filled with smudgy ducks; and I am a boy again, in another world.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- 1 The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, though he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.
- 2 Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach him on Tuesday.

LUNACY LAW REFORM

SIR,—Earl Russell, in introducing this Bill at its second reading, claimed that it dealt with the important parts of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. In reality the provisions of the Bill run counter to a large number of the recommendations of the Commission, not the least important of these being the exclusion of the Magistrate, as the Commission laid special stress on the need for strengthening this part of the machinery of certification; indeed, it proposed that only specially selected magistrates should act as the Judicial Authority.

The supporters of the present Bill appear to have forgotten that it was owing to abuses that resulted when medical men alone controlled the certification of patients that the Judicial Authority was re-established by the Bill of 1890. Another provision of the Bill to which exception is to be taken is that not only is the "Urgency Order" to be kept in force, it is actually to be extended to include "pauper" patients. The danger of this will be realized when it is understood that this means that any doctor, no matter how little his knowledge of mental disease, may send a patient direct to an asylum without even the safeguard of another medical man, much less that of a magistrate. If the matter is to be left entirely in the hands of medical men why not the system that has proved so satisfactory in Scotland where, when a patient is certified, he, his relatives, or friends can call for his examination by two independent doctors? This provides a reasonable safeguard against mistakes.

The part of the Bill which deals with the early treatment of mental illness without certification appears to be excellent until examined more closely, when it becomes evident that what seems to be a voluntary system is only voluntary in so far as it relates to the patient's entry into an institution, and that it ceases to be so when the time comes for him to leave. Section 5, Sub-section 12 (ii) of the Bill provides that the decision ultimately rests with the Board of Control.

I have long contended that if we are to succeed in the treatment of mental illness it should be possible to treat these patients away from the jurisdiction of the Board of Control and the atmosphere of lunacy administration. That I am alone in this view may be gathered from the pronouncement of the

Council of the British Medical Association, which as recently as last year expressed the opinion that there are degrees of mental disorder that need not come under the Lunacy Act, or within the cognizance of the Board of Control.

Under the present Bill the Board is to have powers so far-reaching that it is surprising that autocracy and bureaucracy of so pronounced a character should be advocated by a democratic Government. It deliberately perpetuates the grave impropriety pointed out by the Lord Chief Justice in his recent book, of allowing a mere Department of State to make Law without the assistance of Parliament and without the right of appeal to the courts.

I am, etc.,

London

J. S. RISIEN RUSSELL, M.D.

SIR,—The letter from Mr. R. C. Nelsey, in your issue of November 30, calls for some comment. Throughout there are statements backed by no obvious authority and also somewhat contradictory. He writes: "No human being can decide whether another is, say, a potential murderer," and yet soon commits himself "to strongly advocating the restraint of incipient homicidal maniacs who, happily, are usually easily recognizable." On what authority does he give the latter opinion or what qualifications are his for such dogmatism?

He states that he is informed that a pauper patient has a better chance of regaining his liberty than an inmate in a private asylum. This happens to be the reverse of the facts for reasons which are obvious enough to those in a position to judge. Whose authority does he accept in this matter—a fellow patient's? Because Professor Sangle-Binet chooses to hold and exploit opinions which outrage the feelings and convictions of thousands who are not, and are not likely to be at any time, insane "within the meaning of the Act," that has no reasonable connexion with medical certificates given in this country by medical men—some holding religious views that might be deemed narrow and old-fashioned. The incident of the "marked book" seems trivial, but its basis was doubtless injury to asylum property, a very common occurrence in institutions. In connexion therewith I beg to state that the determination of the mental condition of patients does not rest with an attendant, even with the assistance of "his colleagues." Mr. Nelsey should know this well enough. If his relatives had no knowledge of his incarceration, how was it? It is incredible; if he could mark books, he could write to his relatives. The Act specially provides for this.

There is no more difficult branch of medical study than that concerned with insanity, and yet the man in the street knows all about it! If he has a pain in the chest and spits blood he goes to his doctor for diagnosis, etc., relying upon his trained professional knowledge, but in the case of mental disease, O no! His knowledge of this is equal or superior to a doctor's. Why?

I am, etc.,

"AN ALIENIST"

MEDICINES AND THE INSURANCE ACT

SIR,—I anticipated a protest from the Chemists' Defence Association; and Mr. Mallinson's letter in your last issue is almost exactly the letter I expected. I regret that my "knowledge of what is involved in dispensing medicines under the Insurance Act" is not so limited as to enable me to accept without explanation the figures which he quotes. It is quite true, as he states, that the average total cost per prescription of all the millions of Insurance pre-

scriptions annually dispensed in this country is about 8½d., of which 4½d. represents the chemist's fee. But the word prescription is deceptive. The ordinary reader would naturally assume that it represents the medicaments ordered by a doctor on a single prescription form, for a single patient, on a single occasion. But, for the purposes of the Insurance Act, another meaning has been given to the term. Thus, if a patient suffering from a superficial abscess, which, in the doctor's view, needed fomenting, were ordered on a single script a couple of ounces of boracic lint, an ounce of cotton wool, a few square inches of jaconet and a three-inch bandage, together with a couple of calomel tablets and, possibly, a pound jar of a cod-liver oil preparation, the chemist would receive fees in respect, not of one, but of six, prescriptions, none of which involve more than handing a ready-made product across the counter. The chemist is, in fact, credited with a dispensing fee in respect of each item ordered.

But, associated with this matter of dispensing costs, is a much more serious one. The chemists, through their central committee, have effected a strange bargain with the Ministry of Health, whereby the whole of the sum available for the cost of drugs and dispensing is handed over to them in full settlement of their claims, whether, according to the tariff scale, these amount to more or less. Actually, in the last year, over and above the tariff total, the chemists had a balance to their credit. As a part of this deal, the Ministry promised the chemists that doctors who prescribed for their patients' drugs or dressings beyond the average, should be made liable to official censure and financial penalties. The chemists, assured of maximum payment in any event, were thus given a direct interest in keeping down to the lowest possible level the supply of medicaments to insured patients.

The extent of this scandal may be gauged by an astounding circular letter sent by the Pharmaceutical Committee for the County to every chemist in London, in the course of which he is invited "whenever opportunity offers, to suggest economies in prescribing to your doctors"; "to report to the Secretary of the Pharmaceutical Committee all instances of extravagance in prescribing of whatever kind"; "to remember that your name need not be used in connexion with any reports you make"; and "not to forget that money saved now remains in the Drug Fund for distribution to chemists."

Comment is hardly necessary. The outstanding fact is that it has been made the business of the chemist (in his own financial interest) to check the medical treatment of insured patients; and, incidentally, to subject conscientious doctors to humiliating "investigations" and financial penalties if their therapeutic notions do not "conform." It is doubtful if many of those at whose expense the Drug Fund is maintained—whether as employers, wage-earners, or ratepayers—have the tiniest idea of the scandalous way in which that fund is administered.

I am, etc.,

QUAERO

SCOTS AND ENGLISH

SIR,—How mere Englishmen appraise Scotsmen (and Scotswomen) does not really matter, but I do object to the "line of defence" taken up by your alleged pro-Scottish correspondents. Let England have her Shakespeare (despite his contempt for Scotsmen), Darwin and Charles Peace; Scotland can retort with Robbie Burns, Kelvin, and, I suppose, Edgar Wallace. But it is the *high general level* of developed intelligence among her people—an intelligence re-observed just recently during a three weeks' holiday in my native Highlands—which I regard as Scotland's chief and most estimable claim to fame. Even our poor depressed Scottish miners would in

general knowledge and learning shame many an English civil servant and bank clerk.

I am, etc.,

J. C. MACGREGOR

SIR,—Referring to Mrs. Verden Anderson's letter in the SATURDAY REVIEW for November 23, your readers may be interested to know that a Chart of Famous Men of All Ages, which I constructed more than ten years ago, shows the proportion as between England and Scotland to be almost exactly eight to one, namely, 248 Englishmen to 34 Scots. For Wales and Ireland the figures are 11 and 8 respectively, and the total number of names included in the Chart is 769.

I am, etc.,

A. J. MAAS

Hyères, France

[Several letters are held over.—ED. S.R.]

THE THEATRE OVERTONES OF WAR

BY IVOR BROWN

Douaumont or the Return of the Soldier Ulysses. By Eberhard Wolfgang Moeller. English Version by Graham and Tristan Rawson. Stage Society.
Tunnel Trench. By Hubert Griffith. Duchess Theatre.

HERR MOELLER is a very young and very inarticulate man who appears to have had a very lucky Continental success. On the assumption that Mr. Peter Godfrey's production of the English version of 'Douaumont' bears relation to what Herr Moeller had in mind, I can only say that a good idea has rarely been worse wasted. Some time after the war the Soldier, a piece of human debris left half alive from the shambles at Douaumont, comes back to Berlin, as Ulysses to Ithaca, and finds his wife keeping lodgings for a couple of "suits"; one is a gross commission agent and the other a pompous schoolmaster. At first Penelope denies Ulysses, who has been rendered almost witless by the horrors of Douaumont and the consequent mental complex. He mutters the word, roars the word, broods over the savagery for which the word stands, keeps fingering, as it were, the awful mental scar inflicted by his endurances in that fort, and is the more enraged to discover how little Douaumont means to the working, playing world of Berlin after the war. When he has forced his way into his own home he takes the party out to a cinema where a war-film is being shown and rages against the falsity of the film and the levity of the public. Finally, there is a grand symbolic blaze-up in which Ulysses somehow forces the suits to share his own experience of Douaumont. The producer brings up his artillery and the suits are properly banged about until they begin to realize what Douaumont means. At this point Mr. Esmé Percy, who was playing Ulysses the Soldier with full vocal frenzy began to make curious throatal noises which I took to be an uncanny simulation of a death rattle. It was all very cryptic, but I gather that the old soldier, so far from being killed, was being cured. This was his Douaumont complex being drawn out like a cork from a bottle. As Mr. Percy panted and gurgled, he was, I suppose, quite literally "getting it off his chest."

This kind of elementary symbolism is much beloved by theatrical Left-wingers whose childishness eternally stirs my curiosity. How can the intellectuals be so gorgeously unintelligent? I remember a performance of an Expressionist play in which the producer, in order to show us that the gentleman on the stage was having a brain-storm, solemnly let off fireworks in the wings and added some thunderous noises while the

actor staggered about the stage. The actor, of course, ought to have struck, firmly pointing out that if he could not act a brain-storm with the author's help they were a pair of gross incompetents whose incapacity for stage-work could not possibly be covered up by three penn'orth of gunpowder and the electrician's artful aid. Of course, the whole scene was made ludicrous and the same fate overwhelmed the end of 'Douaumont,' while the gasping Mr. Percy was being stabbed by spot-lights on a darkened stage with Mr. Godfrey's gunners booming away in the wings and the suits invisibly gibbering in their corners. Thus the play, which might have been infinitely poignant, ended in a noisy welter of producer's smoke and psychoanalytic piffle. If everybody who had "an obsession" could be cured by talking about it and getting other people to understand its urgency, how simple the world would be. The real trouble is, of course, that many a complex simply thrives on being released. The more a man talks about his grievance, the more he loves talking and his grievance too. The pretence that repression is always a malefactor is nonsense. It is often a social virtue of the first magnitude.

But we need not follow Mr. Moeller into the fashionable crudities of psychotherapeutic theory. The point is that a potentially good play has been hag-ridden by theory and so ruined. Expressionism is usually the resort of those who have no ideas as well as no technique. Herr Moeller is unusual in having an idea, but his lack of any technical capacity for expressing himself proved disastrous. He even had to bring on a prologue to explain each of his seven scenes in advance. Mr. John Gielgud did the job handsomely, but the job ought not to have been necessary.

Surely it is obvious by now that the moment a man starts to "beat up" the war and arrange overtones for theatrical consumption he makes himself ridiculous. To be rhetorical over such matters and to be vocally noisy about modern artillery is like lending a megaphone to thundering Jove. The dramatist has only to leave the war to look after itself and he will not want for drama. All the bang-bang and brain-storm at the end of Mr. Godfrey's production was so much vain expense of Mr. Percy's spirit in a waste of sound and fury signifying nothing but the author's incapacity for seeing the obvious; namely, the immense natural tragedy in the return of the broken soldier. Imagine the same theme quietly treated; the wounded animal creeping back, the struggle for recognition and for work, the discovery that his wife is owner of a dubious lodging-house, the dream into which Douaumont breaks with its maddening music of artillery, the fevered efforts to put Douaumont out of mind, the clutching at sanity by a man battling with his heroic and horrible, his tyrannous and torturing past—here, indeed, is a potential tragedy of war which would not have wasted the valuable services of Miss Martita Hunt, Mr. Arthur Chesney and Mr. Gravely Edwards, as well as of Mr. Percy and Mr. Gielgud.

Of course, the quiet and naturalistic method does not inevitably win. Mr. Griffith's play had the misfortune to go a trifle flat on the first night, an accident which may happen to any dramatist and for which sensitive criticism must keep a look-out. No overtones here, but undertones overdone. What a place of hazards is the theatre! 'Tunnel Trench' had the bad luck to be written in 1924 and produced soon after, when the war was out of fashion. It was brought back to life by the great success of 'Journey's End' and its second production evoked (on the first night) a less spirited, less moving rendering than the first occasion on a distant Sunday night. The temper, I know, has since been heightened and the mistake in any case was on the right side, that of unforced acting. Mr. Griffith has dramatized in alternate movements the personal tragedy and the impersonal

machine of war. The men who work the latter in comparative security are not cartooned or even gently satirized; their "tabs" are their destiny and not their villainy. They are "good sorts" who happen to be twice as old, and very like, the youngsters they send out to the massacre. The battle they control swings in endless futility over a devil's acre of holes in the mud; every hole is the grave of a legion of boys. The routine of carnage, going on like the rain and with no more obvious purpose or government, is seen from the air and from the ground and from the eye of a compassionate observer. The characterization seems a little thin when the inevitable comparison is made with the richness of 'Journey's End.' It is bad luck on Mr. Griffith that his soldiers should thus have to jostle with Mr. Sherriff's and his looser stagecraft be set against Mr. Sherriff's concentration. 'Tunnel Trench,' I should add, with its faithful portraiture of boys loving, daring, destroying and destroyed, is better calculated to touch the feelings and to stir the mind than all the bang-bang stuff that ever was discharged from the highly explosive stages of Central Europe.

BROADCASTING

THE great French epic 'Roland' is one of those fine things for which the ordinary life of to-day seems to leave no place, nor any time. It is necessary to have come on 'Roland' in one's more leisured youth in order to possess it at all now. How can one be expected to prepare for a broadcast of this tale of "Honour, a friend, anguish, untimely death" by reading through those two hundred and ninety-four stanzas of 'la Geste de Touroude'? Probably, therefore, the broadcast of a radio-dramatic version of 'Roland' will not have made much impression on the average listener. I tried to listen to it from his viewpoint, and, as far as I succeeded in getting inside another person's mind, could not but feel that the performance would seem often dry and disjointed. Yet surely the grandeur of the tale must have got through? I don't know, for I have to own to being one of those who have known 'Roland' for so long that the magic works, however unusual the medium. I can only speak, then, as one of that class of listener. To me this broadcast was satisfying. Mr. Harding did well, I feel, with his choice of scenes, and his play had dignity and passion. The question of "effects" is a very difficult one. I see their necessity, realize what an important and personal part of radio technique they are, yet am impatient of their completely unsubtle use in so many instances. But still, there are signs of a less constant employment of this means. When the "effect" is right the result is extraordinary.

The historical significance of last Monday's broadcast of speeches at the Comrades of the East African Campaign dinner cannot easily be gauged. Wireless becomes, at such moments, a positive boon for the opportunity it affords the outsider to be in touch with momentous events. Lieut.-General Smuts has often stirred us in the past. He holds an audience by his sincerity, and in that power he has few equals among our modern leaders. General von Lettow-Vorbeck, the German commander, spoke as a soldiers to soldiers. There can be few generals in any army capable of making a speech in a foreign tongue so full of wit and the humour of the people whose language he used.

The following are selected from programmes of the coming week. Sunday: Pianoforte recital by Nicolas Orloff. Monday: Sir Lawrence Weaver on 'Art in Industry and Commerce' (6.0), Foundations of Music—Wind Instruments (6.45). Tuesday: Mr. Vernon Bartlett on 'What Geneva is Like' (4.15). Wednesday: 'The Biography of a Witch,' Miss Rebecca West (10.20 p.m.). Thursday: Speeches relayed from the United Association of Great Britain and France (9.25 p.m.). Friday: Mr. T. P. Maley, 'A Ship's Engineer' (Scotland 2.55). All 2LO unless otherwise stated.

CONDOR

LITERARY COMPETITIONS—197

SET BY DILSTON RADCLIFFE

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a sonnet of fourteen syllables (one per line), on the pattern of Frank Sidgwick's Sonnet on an Airman's arrival.

B. Fetching a car from a West End garage recently, we were told by the young second-in-command that they were "punching the old shooting-gallery round the park"—that, in point of fact, it was "out on jolly old test-o." We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for an imaginary account, spoken by this young fellow, of how he drove to and attended his grandmother's funeral.

RULES

i. All envelopes must be marked LITERARY, followed by the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to the Editor, The SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2 (e.g., this week: LITERARY 197A, or LITERARY 197B).

ii. Typescript is not essential, provided the writing is legible, but competitors must use one side of the paper only. Pen-names may be employed if desired.

iii. Where a word limit is set, every fifty words must be marked off by competitors on their MSS.

iv. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves to himself the right to print in part or in whole any matter sent in for competition, whether successful or not. MSS. cannot be returned. Competitors failing to comply with any of the rules will be disqualified. Should the entries submitted be adjudged undeserving of award the Editor reserves the right to withhold a prize or prizes.

Entries must reach the Editor, addressed according to the rules, not later than by the first post on Monday, December 16. The results will be announced in the issue of December 21.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS 195

SET BY IVOR BROWN

A. Pantomime in the shape of 'The Sleeping Beauty' returns to Drury Lane after ten years' absence. The First Commissioner of Works can hardly be absent from such a contribution to the Brightening of London and we offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best Rhymed Prologue to be spoken on Boxing Night by Mr. George Lansbury.

B. Mr. X. is a modest poet with a very modest income. One day he is knocked over by the motor-car of a movie star. So he and his poetry become famous. A Sunday paper offers him a fee comparable to those offered for the matrimonial confessions of movie stars. For it he is to write a Christmas ode conveying the old-world Message of Cheer to the sinners and cynics of the younger generation. Nothing could be more distasteful to Mr. X., who loathes both Cheer and Sunday papers, but as he is extremely hard up and the fee for half a page of verse is equal to his income for half a year, he deems it a Christian act of mercy to his creditors to set about it. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best renderings of a twenty-four line extract from Mr. X.'s ode. It must be remembered that he is endeavouring to remain a poet as well as to meet the conditions.

REPORT FROM MR. IVOR BROWN

195A. Suggestions for the Pantomime Prologue were numerous and rather similar. None stood out by a sustained wit, and none completely failed to be amusing. On the whole, it may be said that Mr. Lansbury had a very good Press, although Bret made a serious and surprising charge:

No more shall unemployed recline at ease
In London's parks beneath the sheltering trees,
For every tree is doomed.

We had never suspected that Mr. Lansbury's leveling propensities were so ruthless, much less that he would proclaim his passion for the axe upon the public stage. H. C. M. refers to

The man whom Londoners will live to bless
The whiskered idol of the penny Press.

and there were many similar greetings which show that the "Bad Old Man" of Bow and Bromley has been turned to something of a good fairy. I found it very hard to make a selection. H. C. M., Helen, Blue Peter and Valimus were all in the first rank, but, on the whole, I prefer Seacape, who is brief, neat and to the point. The first prize goes to Seacape, and the second to Francis Watson, who atones for the dullness of his first ten lines by a witty and pleasing conclusion.

FIRST PRIZE

(Enter Mr. George Lansbury, looking as much like a fairy godmother as his ordinary clothes will allow.)
Comrades, before the actors take their parts,
And you "The Sleeping Beauty" to your hearts,
As First Commissioner of Works, I come
To start the play and help to make things hum.
I, too, have sleeping beauties to awake:
Hyde Park, the Serpentine, St. James's Lake
And many another hedged about with grille
For a full century or so, until,
Like the young prince, I come to make an end
(Voice from the gallery: "Who's your lady friend?")
Of lethargy, and wider fling the door
Of London's open spaces to the poor.
On larger schemes I'm minded to embark,
To make a winter garden of Hyde Park,
Indeed, a sort of Continental Spa
(A still small voice: "What lovely whiskers, Ma!")
Where all of you may take your healthy fun.
For those who favour bathing in the sun,
Kiosks will spring, like mushrooms, from the sward;
Nor shall the swimmer lack his damp reward;
And as Procrustes to a standard bier
(Catcalls and whistles and prolonged "Hear!
Hear!")
Fitted his victims, so in course of time
We'll mould the world. And now the pantomime.

SEACAPE

SECOND PRIZE

Gentles—nay, comrades rather, from our heart
We thank you for your patronage of art;
Yet, ere the glories of that art appear,
Sir Prologue first must ask—what seek ye here?
Think ye, beholding him, that ye shall see
Lavish official philanthropy,
That for its selfless sponsors sometimes gets
Those crowns imperial, crowns and coronets
Which we, the people's rulers, scorn to touch?
That can we not display, its scope is such
As to defy the Drama. For the truth
Look elsewhere. Can we cram, forsooth,
Within this wooden O the very casks
For which each toil-enthirsted labourer asks?
Or shall we show, secure from rain and cold,
(A swelling scene for monarchs to behold),
Our Lido ladies on their London beach,
Singing, like Eliot's mermaids, each to each?
No, for in England's green and pleasant land
A thousand sites may bear, on every hand,
Our democratic New Jerusalem.
Our task is here to kiss the silken hem
Of Beauty's fading garment, and to cry
"Awake! Your ministerial Prince is nigh!
Thrusting his way through controversial briars
And creepers of debate, your Prince aspires
To set you free and place you on his throne!"—
But stay, the Prince's voice becomes our own!
Our duty summons us, the night grows dark,
And we, your Prologue, must inspect the Park.

FRANCIS WATSON

195B. Perhaps it is a mistake to set competitions which need as much explanation as did my second problem. At any rate, I appear to have discouraged entries. These were few, but, as Mr. George Robey used to sing, "What there was, was good." Lester Ralph perfectly hit off the kind of thing I had in mind. Though his ode would please a modern news editor as a good Christmastide feature, it yet retains a full feeling of poetry and could have been written without shame by the most conscientious bard. Marion Peacock did not so successfully meet the conditions of the problem, but her poem is a charming conceit and I recommend her for the second prize, with Lester Ralph as the winner of the first. Excellent entries also came from Nil, Bébé, and Alves.

FIRST PRIZE

This day a little Child
His Mother's pain beguiled,
And you, crop-headed girl, may live to see
Your baby's natal day,
With lip-stick put away,
Unused awhile your box of vanity;
And, by your side, that wondrous morn,
Your Boy grown man to greet his boy new-born.

Shake not the mad cocktail,
Its potency shall fail
That day to soothe your fear lest she should die,
Poor boy; your sporting car
May speed with you afar,
Nor yet shake off the sleuth anxiety.
Have faith in things of greater worth,
And open clearer eyes upon a cleaner earth.

So shall you both have joy,
Frail girl and frightened boy,
As all the earth rejoiced that Christmas Day;
Old evils laid aside,
This newest Christmas Tide,
In simpler ways your simpler homage pay
On this His anniversary
Whose baby grasp enfolds the earth, and even ye.

LESTER RALPH

SECOND PRIZE

Listen, O Youth! I saw as in a dream,
On Christmas night, through laughter and carouse
Three orchard trees bend in the moon's white beam
Their humble boughs.

It was as if the Wise Men standing there
Had come with gifts, and none accepted them,
Having forgotten Christ, the manger bare
And Bethlehem.

Beneath the trees the moon had spread a bed
A tiny, shining bed, and stooping low
I saw the face of her of whom I'd read
Long years ago.

Such things are dead as dust, the Tale is old
And shaken here and there with pain and tears,
While you, Sweet Youth, seek joy, mirth overbold
In these strange years.

Return, return mid junketings to dine,
Live in the moment, this alone is truth,
Laughter and Movement are the bread and wine
Of modern youth.

Be of good cheer, once on a greater night
Judas, the traitor, saw a juttied bough
The while he feasted, but he masked the sight
As you must now.

MARION PEACOCK

PAST AND PRESENT—IV

MR. GERAINT GOODWIN, whose 'Conversations with George Moore' (Benn, 10s. 6d.) is before me, is a writer with curiosities that promise well for his future. At the moment, however, he is concerned not merely to report Mr. Moore but in general to write like him. So far as any imitative ambition can be laudable, this is. But consider what is implied in it.

It is certain that, except in such mimicry as Mr. Max Beerbohm gave us in his delightful 'Christmas Garland,' no one can write like Mr. Moore merely by keeping in mind the style to which Mr. Moore has eventually attained. There is not for any of us a short cut to that which Mr. Moore himself reached by a long and difficult journey, after several false starts and some not unrewarded wanderings from the way. Whoever would write like him must follow in his footsteps, collecting and discarding literary luggage with the same purposefulness disguised as caprice, and bearing always in mind that what is not to one's developing purpose, however valuable it be in itself, must be shed by the wayside.

It is not an easy enterprise, for it requires two qualifications barely compatible: the specific gift of the critic, which is the ability to expose to works of art a mind ready to respond to every experience, and the egotism of the creative writer who makes all great artists over again, in his own image, that he may contemplate only his own part of them. So much humility and so much arrogance are not likely to be housed together, still less likely to be trained to co-operation.

There, as it seems to me, is the problem; and, with all respect to Mr. Goodwin, I do not think he so much as suspects its existence. A very young man, one gathers, and only of late a student of Mr. Moore, he sees the peculiar perfection of the result at which his master has finally arrived, and he thinks to have the result without the process. It is rash; but let him not be downhearted. Supposing him to be endowed with the well-nigh mutually exclusive gifts just mentioned, attainment need not be beyond him. He has but to walk Mr. Moore's way for twenty or thirty years, and then, somehow having kept a virginal mind through a complicated commerce with a great many writers unlike Mr. Moore, to discover Mr. Moore, as his master discovered Sterne and Landor. Ten years more, spent in reshaping Mr. Moore to be a model for his own purpose, and Mr. Goodwin may well be, if not another Mr. Moore, at any rate himself.

It is now perhaps thirty years since Mr. G. K. Chesterton complained that in reading Mr. Moore about other writers one never got more than Mr. Moore in relation to them. Well, of course! Mr. Moore's criticism, good and bad as criticism, has always been simply a means of discovering what would enrich him as a creative writer. His attitude towards the persons of his literary pantheon has been analogous to that of the man who said, in the region of theology, that if God did not exist it would be necessary to invent Him. Balzac, and even Zola, whom Swinburne in a subtly insulting epigram defined as the would-be Davenant of the

French prose Shakespeare, Tourgenieff, many others and eventually Sterne and Landor have been necessary to Mr. Moore. Fortunately for him, they exist; unfortunately, not quite as they would best sustain him. He reshapes them; and though some almost inestimably fine as well as some wrong-headed criticism is thrown off in the process, the real object is not the critic's but that of the creative artist.

Mr. Moore, as the world knows, lives in Ebury Street, where Mr. Goodwin has conversed with him. But spiritually he has had many habitations. Indeed, I, who began reading him more than thirty years ago and have been reading him ever since, have sometimes been vouchsafed a vision of them. Each, if my waking memory retains the truths of my dream, has been named after some great writer, and each before Mr. Moore entered into possession has borne the equivalent of those signboards we see on premises being reconditioned. "Balzac, as soon as the necessary alterations have been made, will be occupied by Mr. George Moore," "Tourgenieff," etc., "Sterne," etc. At the last he has come to dwell in the severe and stately house of Landor, and it is not in him to interfere with the perfect proportions of it. But he will occupy only one wing. In effect, he will recognize only the purely æsthetic work of Landor, though the rest is not less characteristic. He will have his own Landor. Where the critic carefully seeks to receive the impression of a whole literary personality, Mr. Moore wishes to be impressed only by what can serve him as a creative writer.

Now the talk of such a man, ranging from brilliantly just appreciation to mere prejudice, may be on all sorts of levels as criticism, but it will always be valuable for what it tells us of himself. And in the conversations reported by Mr. Goodwin there is addition to the very large number of keys to himself that Mr. Moore has given us in his autobiographical trilogy and his self-reported discourses. There are other attractions. Notably, there is a criticism of the blunder in 'Macbeth,' Act III, Scene 3, which is original and not to be answered. In a very different temper, there is an impish fantasy about the Webbs, rising alternately from bed to continue their interminable sociological task through the night. The general tone of Mr. Moore is caught sometimes for a whole page, though in details there is sometimes a laxity which Mr. Moore would not allow. The weakest part of the book is the long critical introductory section, pointless and the more irritating because done in a manner which promises point. To say nothing with so much the air of saying profound things is a deplorable way of beginning a book which really provides a good deal of literary entertainment.

But it is not on such a note of peevishness that I would end. If Mr. Goodwin's book is one to be read tolerantly, where toleration is possible, and with an occasional grimace, it is very well worth reading. He has essayed a very difficult thing. An impossible thing, I would say, did I not remember Mr. Laurence Housman's small and complete triumph in 'Echo de Paris,' that perfect report of a partly invented conversation with Wilde. It needs courage to attempt such a thing; it needs ability to come so near success as Mr. Goodwin has sometimes come. Allowing something for "beginner's luck" for the dash of the young man who does not see the difficulties, it is a gallant effort.

STET

REVIEWS

"Q" AS CRITIC

BY T. EARLE WELBY

Studies in Literature: Third Series. By Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Cambridge University Press. 10s. 6d.

IT is happily unnecessary to nudge any reader into noticing the main merits of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's criticism. The humanity, the catholicity, the humour and good humour, the understanding of (what is hidden from many scholars) the creative process: these qualities of his have long been recognized. Some of us became aware of them more than thirty years ago; and I can recollect a school-boy who, disliking the politics of a certain weekly, for he was even then savagely Conservative, rejoiced once a week over Q's English and the late A. B. Walkley's polyglot utterances in it. But that was when no one thought to see the author of 'Adventures in Criticism' transformed into a Professor. It is to be feared that even with the cheerful sight of Mr. George Saintsbury, the Saturday Reviewer, become Professor Saintsbury, and no whit the worse for it, even with that incentive to optimism before us, we should have shivered at any such prospect. But we should have been wrong, disquieting ourselves without cause. For Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch is not Q caged and set to merely pedagogic tasks; he is Q become more authoritative but recovering, with the young men whom he stimulates rather than simply instructs, the zest of that time of life in which almost every day brings its literary discoveries.

Sir Arthur is a great teacher because, by instinct and on a wise principle, he prefers arousing the faculties by which we apprehend literature to imparting knowledge or imposing on his listeners any particular method. Of most good teachers the utmost we can say is that they are good for those whom they suit. It is much to say; few of us who deal, in whatever capacity, with literature, can hope for an epitaph so honourable. But Sir Arthur is good for everyone. Whitman, who wrote not only a great deal of odd nonsense but many things incomparably wise, full of a sort of aboriginal wisdom, said he himself was a trainer of athletes and was best rewarded in those who spread a broader breast than his own. Well, it is impossible to imagine Sir Arthur worried because a young man who had listened to his lectures had developed in directions in which he himself has always refused to travel. The one thing that would distress him would be atrophy, irresponsiveness, the old spiritual offence of *accidia*, dull and peevish discontent in a world which contains not only so much great but so much delightful literature.

Always present to him is the salutary truth that literature is a "lark" as well as a sacred thing. He takes his position as King Edward VII Professor of English Literature in the University of Cambridge with a full sense of obligation; but he can also tell those who attend his lectures, even while speaking to them about so practical a matter as 'Reading for the English Tripos,' "*fas est ab hoste doceri*." He disarms hostility by admitting it to be a reasonable condition of affairs as between teachers and taught. And he has tolerance. What goes on in those informal talks about literature to which he attaches more importance than to his official lectures it would be impudent to enquire; but one can imagine him as benevolently irrelevant as Walter Pater when, unable to praise an undergraduate for any positive achievement, he commended him to solemn University authorities for having the exceptionally restful surname, Sanctuary. He does not hesitate in a lecture to warn his hearers against

attending too many lectures; and though he makes his protest against mockery of professors, he is far from exaggerating their importance in the scheme of things.

It would be departing too much from his own temper to seize on particular passages in these lectures and articles on the English elegy, Dorothy Wordsworth, Coventry Patmore, Longinus (a necessary piece of work now at last done in popular form), Keats, Scott. The general atmosphere of the book is more important than any special criticism. Still, a remark or two in passing may be permitted a grateful but not always acquiescent reader. In an excellent sketch of the history of the elegy in English, Sir Arthur misses one curiously interesting point. It is not easy to think of great poets farther removed from each other than Milton and Swinburne, scholarship and republicanism being all that they had in common. But the first and the last of the five noblest elegies in our language exhibit the same strange power of working together imagery fetched from the ends of the earth. If a man should set himself, not in the spirit of the thesis-writer, to make an inventory of the poetical properties used in 'Lycidas' the pen would fall out of his hand in astonishment. There, if anywhere, is proof that style can subdue to happy accord things in themselves utterly discordant. But then look at 'Ave atque Vale.' Mark Pattison's fine saying that an appreciation of Milton was the reward of culture may well be extended to apply to the author of that poem. With those two masterpieces in mind, one is tempted to suggest that it is the elegy which best enables English poets to defy the results of the pigeon-holing prose habit of mind, to amalgamate pollen from the fine flower of every imaginative civilization, to dismiss chronology and exhibit all things *sub specie æternitatis*.

Such is the effect of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch on one that what was to have been a remark in passing has become a paragraph. It is with trepidation, seeing that the conception of infinite space is alien to editorial minds, one ventures to begin another remark. But it is impossible to pass over what he says of "the new reading public."

He has wise, too gently phrased, doubts about that public. It is not so that he puts it, but the truth is that the Victorian educators assumed identity of result from two very different processes—teaching

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everyone to read and teaching everyone how to read. It is the misfortune of literature, alone among the arts, that it can constantly yield utterly irrelevant pleasures. In reading, we may be "improving" ourselves, a horrid idea; or just killing time; or, like so many serious people, mistaking the materials with which the artist in literature works for the things he would have us enjoy. The pattern, when we consider form; the ecstasy, when we consider spirit: it is for those that we should read. Nothing in literature, since it is an art, has merely its intrinsic value: everything in it has its value in the pattern and in the emotional atmosphere it helps to create. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, speaking *urbi et orbi*, ought to say as much through a megaphone. He does not say it at all. But there is such a thing as reading between the lines.

It is so that he should be read. What he does say is nearly always valuable and pertinent, but his main concern is to tease his listeners into thought. And the least academic of us may rejoice that his are the sort of lectures that happen at a great English university. Happy the country in which such things are possible under the most respectable auspices! Keats on an occasion in his troubled life said he never quite despaired and he read Shakespeare. Well, in spite of post-war conditions, the young men need not despair, and they can listen to Q.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE EMPIRE

The Sovereignty of the British Dominions. By A. B. Keith. Macmillan. 18s.

The Dominions and Diplomacy. By A. G. Dewey. Longmans. Two Vols. 45s.

THESE two books make their appearance at a singularly opportune moment, for the Report of the Simon Commission early next year is bound to concentrate public opinion upon the structure of the Empire, and before another step forward is taken it is well to realize what has already been accomplished. Although Professor Keith and Mr. Dewey treat of the same subject, they regard it from slightly different angles, and the latter very definitely looks at what he calls the Britannic Question from the Canadian point of view. They may thus be said to be complementary, and as their impartiality is beyond praise, they form an invaluable guide not only to the political and constitutional position, but also to the aspirations of the Dominions in the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The proceedings of the last Imperial Conference naturally engage the attention of both authors, and Professor Keith protests against the assumption that the link between the Dominions and Great Britain is now the Crown alone. It must be admitted that the evidence he cites in his favour is fairly strong, but when he goes on to maintain that the Dominions could not secede from the Empire even with the consent of the King, he is on dangerous ground, for a monarch who can cede Cornwall without consulting Parliament can surely grant independence to Canada. In fact, the author would here appear to be mistaking custom for law, and it is not yet even a convention of the Constitution that the cessions of territory require Parliamentary sanction. Mr. Dewey obviously does not agree with Professor Keith, and in so doing he almost certainly represents opinion in the Dominions, which is of more actual importance than any number of precedents.

However, Professor Keith is by no means so bigoted an Imperialist as his enemies sometimes maintain, and he is of the opinion that now the question has been raised appeals to the Privy Council must inevitably be abolished. On the other

hand, he expressly denies the right of the Dominions to remain neutral in a struggle in which Great Britain is engaged, though he admits that the Kellogg Pact has introduced a fresh complication in this respect. Both authors frankly recognize the influence exercised by the League of Nations upon the Empire, but while Professor Keith contents himself with a masterly analysis of existing obligations, Mr. Dewey welcomes the Genevan institution as tending to make the relations of the various parts of the Empire a world, rather than a purely British, concern.

Behind any discussion of the future of the Empire there looms up the spectre of its possible dissolution, and neither Professor Keith nor Mr. Dewey is the man to burke a question because it is unpleasant. The former, as has been shown, believes that only the British Parliament can sever the connexion, whereas the latter is more concerned with the political than with the purely legal aspect of the problem. He points out very clearly that even if all the Dominions achieved their independence Great Britain, in virtue of her colonial possessions, would still be a Great Power, whereas the independent Dominions would be of very little importance in the counsels of the world. That this fact is realized even by the most extreme of Nationalists is quite obvious, and it is possibly one of the strongest forces making for the continuance of the existing order.

These works are an eloquent testimony to the unwillingness of the leading authorities to define in any detail the relations of the Dominions both to Great Britain and to one another, and yet it is difficult to see how much longer this can be delayed. The centrifugal forces in the Empire draw their strength from Cape Town and Dublin, and to a lesser extent from Ottawa, while the other Dominions are generally satisfied with their present status. To make this confusion worse confounded, India may ere long

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take her place in the British Commonwealth of Nations as an equal, while already several of the Dominions exchange representatives with Foreign Powers. It is, of course, quite out of the question to put back the clock, even if any responsible person wished to do so, but it is impossible not to wonder if there can be finality short of the disruption of the Empire.

Neither of the present writers treats at any length the economic aspect of the Imperial problem, and in reality it lies outside the scope of both works. Yet it is commercial rather than purely political considerations that are leading to the appointment of Dominion ministers and consuls, and within recent years there has grown up a school of thought in Great Britain which maintains that the only way to hold the Empire together is to regard it as an economic unit. Mr. Dewey considers, as every Canadian must, that the economic development of the United States must affect that of the British Empire, and he rightly says that the former is to-day at the parting of the ways. In view of her proximity to the United States, he believes that Canada will play the most important part in the future relations of the two Anglo-Saxon countries.

Whatever view one may take of the future of the Empire, there can be no doubt that these two books are indispensable to those who wish to become acquainted with the tendencies at work to-day. They are not only marked by a wealth of learning, but are characterized by a moderation which might well serve as a model to other workers in the same field. If Professor Keith leans somewhat to the Imperialist, and Mr. Dewey a little to the Nationalist, standpoint, both writers are scrupulously fair to those who disagree with them, and it is not too much to say that the works of both should find a place upon the shelves of every public library in the Empire.

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The Life of Alfred Nobel. By H. Schück and R. Sohlman. Heinemann. 21s.

IT is odd that we should have had to wait more than thirty years for this authorized biography of the famous Swede who did more than any man of modern times to enable armies to kill each other in large numbers, and left part of the fortune thus acquired to bring about the ideal of universal peace. Dr. Stresemann, to whom half of the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded for 1926, observes that Alfred Nobel "wanted the forces of Nature his own inventive genius had unchained to be curbed by the restraining power of the human soul." It was not, indeed, with any view to improving the weapons of war that Nobel began his epoch-making experiments on nitro-glycerine in 1862. He aimed solely at providing miners with a more efficient and handy means of rending the rocks than was provided by gunpowder. As far as efficiency went, there was little to be desired; but the new explosive proved to be extremely dangerous to handle. A number of serious explosions occurred, notably that at Aspinwall in 1866, which caused the loss of seventy-four lives. The description of the casual way in which nitro-glycerine was handled, reprinted in one of the numerous appendices to this volume, is highly amusing, but leaves the reader wondering that there were not more catastrophes.

Nobel set himself to devise some way of making the new explosive safer in transport and in use. He was driven to do this by the fact that many countries had prohibited the use or transport of nitro-glycerine, while others, like England, submitted it to such severe conditions as in practice to amount to prohibition. He hit on the happy idea of mixing nitro-

glycerine with some absorbent material, and after many experiments decided on using the porous clay known as kieselguhr. The resultant product, which he christened dynamite, has turned out to be one of the greatest boons ever conferred on those who work mines and quarries, or drive roads or railways through hilly districts. Nobel later devised still more powerful and equally safe explosives, but it is with dynamite that his name has always been chiefly associated, and the full account of his work now given cannot fail to be read with interest.

Nobel was not the first to prepare nitro-glycerine, but he "revolutionized the whole technique of explosives" by his discovery of the right way to make it explode. The high explosives, as they are called, will not usually explode like gunpowder by mere heat; they must be struck a smart blow and heated at the same time. Nitro-glycerine itself is fortunately unique in its feminine readiness to explode when not required. The invention of the detonator lay at the bottom of Nobel's commercial success. Incidentally, it made all the modern military explosives possible. Nobel himself was the first to produce a practical smokeless powder, and the famous cordite suit injured his feelings as well as his purse. But it seems that he seldom worked with a view to improving warlike munitions. When he perceived that his inventions were being largely used for military purposes, the lifelong pacifism which he had learnt from Shelley was deeply shocked, and he could only console himself by the hope that his factories might end war sooner than congresses: "The day when two army corps will be able to destroy one another in one second, all civilized nations will recoil from war in horror and disband their armies."

LITERARY HISTORY

A Literary History of England. By Bernard Groom. Longmans. 8s. 6d.

Cross Currents in English Literature of the Seventeenth Century. By H. J. C. Grierson. Chatto and Windus. 15s.

IT is not very plain in what a literary history of England differs from a history of English literature, to judge by Mr. Bernard Groom's book. It has, indeed, the look of a school text-book in library attire and it might be suggested, with respect, that its native form was the more congenial. This is not to say that it has not considerable merits for its original purpose but to suggest that these are not all of them adapted to a more sophisticated audience. Thus we read:

The life of John Keats (1795-1821) was shorter even than that of Shelley. Yet in his little span of years he made as great strides towards perfection in his art as perhaps any other man has ever done in so brief a time. Keats was above all things a poet.

The mark of one who deals with minds younger than his own is rather prominent and this can hardly be regarded as a merit. Can the phase of Shakespeare's art after 'King Lear' be "best described as 'lateness'"? And to adults is it very helpful to write, "In Bacon, the intellect was paramount"? Criticism of this carping order does injustice, we fully admit, to Mr. Groom's book which, at its level, has its utility, but even in a manual there should be reference to Donne's love poetry.

The transition from Mr. Groom's book to Professor Grierson's is the change from school to university. While the former resembles a school book, the latter is textually a course of university lectures. Its alternative title, 'The World, the Flesh and the Spirit, their Actions and Reactions'—Professor Grierson has not time for the Devil—is a clue to his main theme which, baldly stated, is the opposition



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of the sacred and the profane. A nice quotation, dated 1805, from John Foster, a sincere Christian of the Evangelical school serves to define the issue in an introductory way: "What is denominated Polite Literature, the grand school in which taste acquires its laws and refined perceptions, and in which are formed, much more than under any higher austerer discipline, the moral sentiment, is for the far greater part hostile to the religion of Christ." The earnest and puzzled writer goes on to explain that he refers not to writers "palpably irreligious" but "to the general community of . . . elegant and ingenious authors." It is in the light of this opposition, as old, says Professor Grierson, as Christianity itself, and redefined with equal precision and more humour by Newman, that English literature from the Renaissance to the Restoration is surveyed in these lectures.

It would savour of impertinence to praise a scholar of Profssor Grierson's distinction: quality of thought and learning may be expected and taken for granted, and a survey of a great period of English literature in terms of a great and fundamental human issue conducted with skill, knowledge, penetration and depth can hardly fail to be exciting. "Religion and the love of amusement," writes Professor Grierson, "are the two strongest passions of the human heart, one or other of which at times threatens to swallow the other entire, but the balance is sooner or later redressed." So we have exhibited the clash of Renaissance and Reformation, of Italian humanism and German religion. Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton and Dryden are examined in the light of this issue, and Shakespeare himself, it is held, was limited by the fact of the collision of two principles in the mind of his age.

Professor Grierson doubts whether the dilemma can be escaped or the riddle solved and expresses a modest conclusion in the words: "So much only seems to be clear, that both the secular and the spiritual have their imprescriptible rights, that if brought into too sharp opposition, both suffer." The enquiry is conducted at a level on which the student of literature needs to be also a philosopher and an historian. The literary aspect here given is extremely suggestive and interesting, and without seeing eye to eye with Professor Grierson or feeling that no point has been missed, one has to recognize a work in the true tradition of philosophic criticism. Some preliminary questionings, indeed, suggest themselves. Thus, the conflict discussed is, it might be suggested, older than Christianity and at least as old as Plato. Again, the belief in religious freedom of the best Puritans might be more fully recognized. And, lastly, would it be the query of a very outrageous scepticism that asked whether religion and "amusement" were not both, in a measure, a kind of whistling to keep up our spirits? Professor Grierson in his preface quotes Plato in support of his contention that our nature requires some support in faith. Will faith in the worth of whistling the best tune suffice?

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Daguerrotypes. By Ada Wallas. Allen and Unwin. 5s.

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MRS. GRAHAM WALLAS will be remembered as the author of 'Before the Bluestockings,' reviewed in these columns some months ago. Her "daguerrotypes" are a series of scenes remembered from her mid-Victorian childhood, beginning when she was very young indeed and ending with her entry into a local high school.

Mrs. Wallas was one of a large family; she is most happy here in her descriptions of their games and their association with their gentle, charming father. Excellent, too, are the glimpses of "society" in a small provincial town, and of the school, run by two impoverished maiden ladies of excessive gentility and quite extraordinary incompetence, where she had her first lessons. Probably because she spent most of her time with brothers and sisters of her own age she took an eager interest in the lives and opinions of grown-up people. Her parents were Baptists, living in a small town by the sea in Devonshire, and many of her early encounters were with people of the type described in that story of a parallel childhood—Edmund Gosse's 'Father and Son.' Indeed, to remember that book is to realize how hard it was for a child to thrive spiritually in such a community. Nothing was so much dreaded by this sensitive little girl and her brothers and sisters as inevitable questionings about the state of their "shrinking little souls." Fortunately for them all, their parents were advanced in their ideas, with a broad mind and a sane outlook.

Their ancestors had been of sterner stuff. Mrs. Wallas as a little child could not understand their asceticism and religious fervour. She found it hard to discover and admire in them, as one of her brothers very justly did, that they were "lovers of good literature and had no respect of persons." Many of her own opinions she took wholesale from the pages of the family book of "Confessions," wherein her mother's friends would write solemn answers to a series of solemn questions. She was quite bewildered to find that her parents, in spite of the fact that most of their friends, of both sexes, testified that their "pet aversion" was "a strong-minded female," did not look unkindly on the Women's Rights movement. In all these slight sketches, delightfully written, full of wit and irony, Mrs. Wallas recaptures the feelings of a child. She writes as one looking back, but the atmosphere and reactions of childhood are perfectly recollected.

Mrs. Gandy's book is a very different record, also of a happy childhood spent among brothers and sisters. She, too, was fortunate in her parents and the atmosphere in which she grew up was congenial and happy. There the resemblance between the books ends. 'A Wiltshire Childhood' is full of the joys of an out-of-doors, go-as-you-please kind of life. It will amuse children, while Mrs. Wallas's could hardly be understood or appreciated by a child.

SERVICE TO A VISION

Captain Scott. By Stephen Gwynn. The Bodley Head. 12s. 6d.

THE brilliant Antarctic record of Robert Falcon Scott has already been fully described in his own account of the voyage of the *Discovery* and his last journals. But there is still room for such an admirably written and sympathetic sketch of his fine, inspiring career as has now been written by Mr. Stephen Gwynn—a master in this form of literary art. The essential feature of his work is the skilful manner in which it constantly keeps before us the debt which we owe to Captain Scott, quite apart from his geographical achievement, for reminding us that "action for him, as for every knight errant, was only the expression of an idea—his service to a vision." Scott himself never talked big about ideals; he was a typical naval man in his self-repression, almost amounting to shyness, before the public. We are all the more indebted to Mr. Gwynn for emphasizing the true meaning of Scott's too brief life-work:

His supreme achievement is that he touched the imagination of his country as no other man has done during the course of this century; that he impressed on

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the public mind an example of heroic constancy exhibited in scenes where he was first only among his peers, yet always the directing mind and will.

Mr. Gwynn adds a good deal to our knowledge of Scott's personal life—especially of his naval career before he was able to devote himself to the quest of the South Pole. He has been able to draw largely for this purpose on many of Scott's unpublished letters, describing the detail of day-to-day routine in a warship.

LONDON IN WAR-TIME

From Day to Day, 1916-1921. By Viscount Sandhurst. Arnold. 18s.

THE concluding volume of Lord Sandhurst's diary is chiefly remarkable for the vivid picture which it paints of London in the last three years of the war. The author was appointed Lord Chamberlain in 1912, and retained that responsible though not unduly onerous post through succeeding administrations until 1921. In the excellent preface which Lady Sandhurst writes, she sketches the outline of her husband's admirable life, filled with public work done without friction and without advertisement. As Governor of Bombay from 1895 to 1900 he had to deal with famine, plague and sedition, but, as Sir Andrew Wingate observes, "he met the continually increasing complications with unflinching courage and an unruffled temper." The vastly improved housing conditions in Bombay, with the consequent improvement in native health, are a testimonial to his public spirit. His own opinion was that his most important work was done on the Commission of 1906 which paved the way for the Union of South Africa; but his unwearied toil on behalf of two of the great London hospitals was perhaps no less helpful to humanity.

As Lord Chamberlain, Lord Sandhurst had many opportunities of knowing what was going on behind the political scenes during the war, and his diary—though devoid of sensational attacks on his colleagues—contains many interesting vignettes of leading statesmen. His dominant passion was that of loyalty to Mr. Asquith, who "really is an amazing person—such true sense of proportion—utter selflessness, calm, patient to a degree, which quidnuncs, for the most part fools, mistake for callousness." Lord Sandhurst evidently sympathized with those who refused to forgive Mr. Lloyd George for "jockeying Asquith"—"his speaking is marvellous; if talking and words could win the war we should have won it twice over, but I've yet to find the man who trusts him." Much is written about the scandalous attacks on Lord Haldane, to whose brilliant military organization the country owed so much, as we now recognize, though at the time "no one ever was so cruelly and unjustly used." There is a high tribute to Lord Balfour as illustrating "the extreme value of an ex-Prime Minister who, to use his own words, was willing to serve in any capacity and under anyone so long as he could be thought of use." Above all, Lord Sandhurst admired the unflinching public work of the King and Queen, which his official position allowed him to see at close quarters: "I wish I could think all realize how they work and how unself-sparing they are."

The brief notes on the situation in London from day to day are always enlightening. There are some brilliant pictures of the air-raids, especially that of the wounded coming into Bart.'s. The waste and muddle are touched with an unsparing hand, and the lack of cohesion in the Government especially shocked Lord Sandhurst—"each and everyone acts entirely on his own, never was such a state of things." The food shortage is well depicted—the Turf Club saved a pound a week by serving toast only when it was asked for, and they had to adopt napkin rings at Knowsley.

NEW FICTION

By L. P. HARTLEY

A Farewell to Arms. By Ernest Hemingway. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Return of the Brute. By Liam O'Flaherty. Mandrake Press. 5s.

Strange Stories. By Algernon Blackwood. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

The Iron Man and the Tin Woman. By Stephen Leacock. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

MR. HEMINGWAY is a novelist of the expatriated. 'Fiesta' showed us a group of Americans and one Englishwoman being violently idle, first in Paris and then in Spain. They went to bull-fights, they made love, they drank. Above all, they drank. They were not congenial company even in a book, but they knew how to get the utmost out of their emotions, and though bored and desperate, they were seldom dull.

The same characters, or others like them, reappear in 'A Farewell to Arms.' There is an Englishwoman serving as a nurse in the Italian Red Cross, there is an American who has joined the Italian army for no better reason than that he speaks the language. There is the Continental scene as envisaged by a thirsty Anglo-Saxon: cafés, vermouths, drinks—unlimited drinks. There is the same dialogue between the lovers, the American soon cuts out Catherine's Italian admirer—trivial, pregnant, witty, yet coming from the heart and charged with a plangent emotion. 'A Farewell to Arms' contains most of the ingredients of its predecessor, but it has others as well, and it is a much better book. The Italian officers, with whom the hero was on intimate terms (Mr. Hemingway has a gift for portraying friendship as well as love), are excellently drawn and the war passages are vivid and exciting. No doubt the war in Italy is easier to describe than the war on the Western Front: there was more movement, hope ran higher, disappointment was more acute; the emotions aroused were more comparable to those of everyday life. And, as chronicler of the war in Italy, Mr. Hemingway has the field almost to himself: the novelist writing of the Western theatre must first disentangle his impressions from those of scores of others before he can be certain that he is drawing on his own experience. Warfare in the Italian campaign was still warfare in the old style, stimulating not stultifying, to the imagination; at least so it seems, from the American "tenente's" partial glimpses of it.

But he was glad to escape with his mistress to a neutral country: all for love and the war well lost. Mr. Hemingway comes as near as a novelist can to making unmixed, lyrical love his central theme. Other people's happiness is difficult to enjoy, in life or in fiction; we experience, even before Fate does, a kind of envy at the spectacle of so much bliss, and long to prove the unworthiness of its possessors. Certainly, this particular unmarried couple, rejoicing in their sin, present a broad target to the censorious; and even to a less jaundiced view, there is something wanton and wasteful in their happiness. But, if it is an offence to be happy, they certainly pay for it a thousandfold; the concluding scenes are unbearably painful, and would wring tears from a stone. The hypercritical may question whether Henry would have been granted such freedom of access to Catherine's accouchement; but he was headstrong and hard to cross and had no respect for circumstances:

If people bring so much courage to this world the world has to kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it

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kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too, but there will be no special hurry.

Closing the book, the reader will agree that the narrator had every reason for espousing this gloomy view.

With 'Return of the Brute' we are back once more on the Western Front—very unquiet this time. It was, perhaps, inevitable that Mr. O'Flaherty should write a book about the war: it provides him with all those horrors on which his imagination delights to dwell. And for this reason one expected his book to be particularly interesting; the kind of incident that paralyses the talent of the milder-mannered novelist, making him see all colours black without distinction of shades, stimulates Mr. O'Flaherty, who can easily pile Pelion upon Ossa and see a hundred points of difference between a flea and a louse. But the book, though as vivid and startling and dreadful as one could wish, does not ring true as an account of the war. The details are convincing enough, but the general impression is of a nightmare based, indeed, on actuality, but so transmuted by the author's characteristic, besetting fancies, that as a contribution to history (whatever may be its relation to art) it is not trustworthy. The central figure is the lout, physically over- and mentally under-developed, who appears constantly in Mr. O'Flaherty's Irish tales; a Caliban capable of affection and hatred, but of a mind so sluggish that it takes the whole book to get an idea into it. That idea (need one say) is murder. The corporal has been unpleasant to Gunn, and to Gunn's protégé, the weakling Lamont: so the corporal must die, with every circumstance of physical horror. Before the climax is reached one feels that the enemy, so far from being dangerous, is a kind of police-force, saving this little section of exasperated fellow-soldiers from themselves. It is a typical O'Flaherty drama of which the scene happens to be the war: and yet, when he allows his subject to get hold of him, he does it every justice:

The consciousness of their past associations welled gloriously through their beings in a wave of romantic splendour; all the pride of a soldier's life, the rattle of drums, the thunderous music of brass instruments, the applause of multitudes as the disciplined companies march past with a swaying rhythm, the singing in taverns of war songs; battles, and after them the parade of the survivors before the battalion commander, who, astride his horse, harangues his men in a voice that is harsh with pride and sorrow for the dead; all the queer, foolish romance of a soldier's life that only a professional soldier can understand.

Mr. Blackwood's 'Strange Stories' transport one to a region where dangers are not organized and concrete and wholesale, but capricious and insubstantial and private. As material for fiction, the war and the supernatural are almost equally intractable: the war is too stubborn to be moulded into a coherent shape, the supernatural too impalpable. Many ghost-stories are written as a kind of literary exercise; they are a first-rate test of narrative ability, for the least practised reader can tell whether or not they "come off." But Mr. Blackwood's are the natural expression of his mind, and so have the authentic quality of art. They are carefully arranged, of course, and differ greatly in their defiance of "natural" laws; but one feels that it is easier for Mr. Blackwood to write about the supernatural than not to. Here are nearly 800 pages of it, as proof!

Nor could Mr. Leacock, one would think, put pen to paper without being funny; humour is as much his element as the supernatural is Mr. Blackwood's. 'The Iron Man and the Tin Woman' shows him at his best; not funny, perhaps, so much as outrageously funny. To enjoy him thoroughly one must have a share of his high spirits.

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BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

SILVER APPLES OF THE MOON

BY VIOLA GERARD GARVIN

IN reading, as in other things, childhood accepts with a whole heart or not at all. It is more literal than later ages, and it is more fantastic. Facts as facts are exciting. Almost anything is credible. For life is still in its morning and even custom startles with novelty. A mouse may be as dangerous as a crocodile. Magic lurks everywhere. This lizard may turn footman; that lamp may be Aladdin's. And who knows what smoky form may writhe out of that bottle if the stopper be withdrawn? The margins between sleep and waking are shadowy with dream forests and drowsy with the fanning of enchanted wings. And the other world lies so near to this world, it is but a wish and a heart-beat and you are there.

So armed with fact so mounted on fancy, the child goes his way. His books should furnish him, and be companions on his road. It is as well to remember, then, that he rejects as absolutely as he accepts. He detects sentimentality. Prigs will not do for heroes. The moral—for the good is always the fair, and always triumphant—must not be insistent or utilitarian. Above all, fairy land must be orderly and observe its own conventions or doubt steps in and the court becomes a pack of cards.

This train of reflection was started by the perusal of the fifteen best children's books of the year for notice. There they lie on the floor, gaily bound, vividly illustrated, for the most part highly readable. "But what makes a good book for children?" I asked myself. And myself countered by asking me what made a bad. Then I looked backwards to see if memory might help, and I found that what I remembered with most love has become the living essence of imagination. Old school stories are dead; so is Henty except in name. But Roland and Oberon, Ogier the Dane and Lancelot, Achilles, Rapunzel and the Goose-Girl are indestructible. Is this, then, the answer? A good child's book is just that airy brick of thought that lays the foundations for imagination's later building. This is a high test. And few books in modern nurseries will pass it. Yet, let us keep it in mind even when we admit our children to reading less permanent in texture; even when we throw Annuals to them, like sops to Cerberus. Of these compendiums, we must at least grant goodwill and variety, if no inspiration, to *The Christmas Tree* 1929. (Benn. 6s.) Artists like Low and Cecil Aldin draw for it. Mr. Algernon Blackwood, among other distinguished folk, contributes a story, though no one could call so terrifying an experience a child's story. And the proceeds of its sale are to go to the Children's Country Holiday Fund.

Still, the main thing is to set the nursery reading. And there are five little books in the pile before us that will do that admirably. *The Perfect Zoo* (Harrap. 5s.) is a lively, exceedingly polite story by Miss Eleanor Farjeon. You have only to look at the wrapper where five toy animals are voyaging in patchwork balloons. And when you discover that three of them are metamorphosed children condemned to search for the Green-headed Beetle; when you realize that the balloons were luckily growing on a neighbouring cactus when king lion lost his temper, you will not be content until you can read the story from cover to cover. It has a moral, which is a pity, and so has *Noisy Nora*, Mr. Hugh Lofting's latest creation. (Cape. 3s. 6d.) Nora was a disagreeable child with a nasty habit of chewing with her mouth open. The pigs could not stand it, and even the worms, "as soon as they heard the loud and dreadful noise of Nora gobbling, turned deathly pale and swiftly scuttled back beneath the earth." She was cured, you will be glad to learn. Mr. Lofting's printing and his pictures are very fine indeed.

The other books for the youngest are brilliant squibs sent up by great men in a nursery humour. *The Pirate Twins* will be most people's favourite (Faber and Faber. 3s. 6d.) For Mr. William Nicholson draws them so very black. And their brief story is so exactly right. May found them on the sands. She took them home and bathed them and fed them and taught them. Education made them restless and they returned to sea, for piracy was in their blood. "But they never

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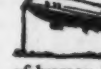
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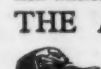
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forgot their home, and always came back in time for May's birthday." Any nursery that gets this book will be searchings for blackamoors among the starfish all next summer. So for caution's sake you may prefer Mr. H. G. Wells's *The Adventures of Tommy* (Harrap. 5s.), which plays tricks with the proudest of rich proud men, or Mr. William Makepeace Thackeray his *Alphabet*. *The Thackeray Alphabet* (Murray. 3s. 6d.), indeed, is treasure trove. It might have perished and we should have been the losers. For every line of this irresponsible A B C has Thackeray's inventive, free humour and the story of its origin shows the great heart that beat under that Victorian waistcoat. He called on his friends the Chadwicks and found a small boy sobbing in the corner, because he would not learn his alphabet. "No wonder," said Mr. Thackeray, "it is such a very dull thing to learn." And he sat down at once and produced his own A B C upon folded notepaper. P particularly took the woebegone little Eddy's fancy, for he was apt to quote it in his eighty-fifth year:

P is a pimple—'tis a thing which grows
Sometimes upon a luckless parson's nose.

Who could have foreseen that a frail child's book "kept in a little blue silk check case" would span a century?

The poets this year are on the side of the hearth rather than of the angels. And though the publisher of at least one of the four before us claims the authentic "R. L. S." note for his author, if we make comparison 'The Child's Garden of Verses' still blooms serene and unmatched. But there are charming things in all these books. In *Everything and Anything* (Medici Society. 3s. 6d.) Miss Dorothy Aldis wins our sympathy at once for 'Lions and Dragons':

Snap-dragons and Dande-Lions
Are not so very wild—
I never yet saw one forget
And try to hurt a child.

A Dande-Lion never ROARS
Not even once, for fun;
Nor waves his tail with angry wail
Because he hasn't one!

A Snap-Dragon will never snap
No matter how he feels,
Except to try to catch a fly
To brighten up his meals.

Like her, and like Mr. John Drinkwater, whose *More About Me* (Collins. 7s. 6d.) is a second volume to 'All about Me' of last year, Mr. Karl Parsons is chiefly engaged in making ordinary things dance to his verses. The bath, with the mysteries of the run-away pipe, the slipperiness of soap and the general nuisance of washing, preoccupies all of them. Mr. Parsons is luckiest of the three in one respect. He has his own daughter for illustrator to *Ann's Book* (Medici Society. 6s.). And Miss Jacynth has never drawn more delightfully than here. Ann is an adorable long-legged child with elf-locks and bright eyes. Her cat is "just too tabby and sweet." And Juliet's nurse surely sat for the portrait of old Nanny. But the best thing in his book to our mind is 'The Boots':

Just look at these boots; they're much too tight;
However on earth shall we get them right?
It's really a stornary, I must say;
They were perfectly comfy yesterday.

Nanny do help me; please don't laugh;
Really they've shrunk to nearly half,
They look just as if they ought to be
The other way round, but . . .

Oh!

I see

With the last poet on our list, we must leave home and prepare to travel. For Mr. Masfield's *South and East* (Medici Society. 10s. 6d.) points to a far country that lies "South of the Earth, East of the Sun." The way is harsh and perilous. But the end of the journey brings the lost Princess and the whole of happiness. It is the old tale of bird maidens who come by night to dance under trees; of princes who would fain keep watch to snare the trampler of their lawns; of the youngest prince who, alone escaping slumber, steals the feathery dresses; of how he plights his troth to the fairest; of how she vanishes and how he wins her at last. It is the old tale. But its youth is perpetual. Miss Jacynth Parsons interprets Mr.

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I wish it were not so, but I would send him flying over the nearest chimney-pot if someone offered me *The Tale of Tom Tiddler* (Collins. 7s. 6d.) instead. For this is Miss Eleanor Farjeon at her Martin-Pippin-Nursery-rhymes-of-London-Town best. She writes as though Cinderella's godmother had put on her spectacles and sharpened a quill to indite true stories for her great god-children. This is the very stuff of fairy, yet it is reasonably grounded, seemly in movement, and so beset with whimsical problems sensibly solved that it must delight everyone. Tom Tiddler, you must know, was a little boy who lived in a meadow. For he had had the good luck to be "born in a hollow oak, in a buttercup-and-daisy field." He had further good luck. Jinny Jones suddenly came no more to pick up gold and silver from his ground by the light of the moon. And Tom, who set out to rescue her from a fierce giant, had Simon the Brown Owl and Jerry the Goat to help and advise him on the way. Now Simon was exceedingly wise, and Jerry unbelievably greedy. But between them they brought Tom through the odd situations in which he found himself in London Town, where Gogmagog the giant lived. Never was there a town more bewitchingly innocent than this London. From Moor's Gate, where a seven-foot Moor is brewing his coffee, to Oxford Circus, where there are roundabouts and swings, ringmasters and clowns, every cobble is knobbly with adventure, every doorway shines and beckons. Mr. Norman Tealby's pictures are in the same hunt-the-slipper spirit.

*

Miss Farjeon knows the way to the cool morning hour in that border forest of dream. And so did those early storytellers of Greece, Rome and Ireland whose lovely imaginings are part of Miss Romer Wilson's *Silver Magic* (Cape. 7s. 6d.) The tales she chooses range from 'Cupid and Psyche' to the stately eighteenth-century French versions of 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'Cinderella.' She includes the world's cruellest fairy story, 'The Yellow Dwarf.' All these are poignant, beautiful and enchanting now as they were to me twenty years ago. Was it fanciful, then, to call a review of fifteen children's books by such a title as that above? No. For at last the secret is out. Of all these books, if I could give only one, I should choose *Silver Magic*. It is the richest, the rarest, the most enduring, and the child who thumbs it will

pluck till times and times are done,
The silver apples of the moon,
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One book remains. It is not a child's book in any sense of the word, yet for sixteen and upwards it lifts the cottage latch at close of day and brings the traveller home from wandering. *The Vicar of Wakefield* has England in its fibre—English county, English humour, an English and wistful tenderness. The man who wrote it knew tragedy, yet he brings mellow and merry comfort. Mr. Arthur Rackham's pictures are the special feature of this edition. (Harrap. 15s. net). They show the angel in Goldsmith. But where is poor Poll?

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MOTURING THE ROAD TRAFFIC BILL

By W. HAROLD JOHNSON

THIS year the usual seasonal motoring topics for a Christmas number, fog and flood, frost and snow, are overshadowed by doings in Parliament. The new Road Traffic Bill seems an intelligent effort to meet conditions that have entirely outgrown the quarter of a century old legislation that is supposed to regulate them.

The Motor Car Act of 1903 became law at a time when the motor car was little more than a problematical and perhaps dangerous toy; no one at that time could possibly foresee the growth that would take place in the revival of the roads as a means of serious travel; and when all things are considered it must be admitted that the Act, of which the main provision was recommended for repeal by a Royal Commission only two years after it became law, has worked no worse than most other acts of Parliament. The main provision of the 1903 Act was of course the 20 m.p.h. speed limit, and naturally interest in the new Bill centres round the proposed treatment of this regulation.

The Bill proposes the total abolition of this 20 m.p.h. speed limit, and among all road users there is much difference of opinion as to whether this total abolition, as contrasted with a raising of the limit, is a desirable thing. In order to establish control over road manners the police, in the absence of a speed limit provision, will have to rely for their activity on prosecuting drivers for bad driving—"careless or dangerous" according to the Bill. Now the judgment of what constitutes careless or dangerous driving is no simple thing, it is definitely beyond the capacity of the average bucolic constable or bench of magistrates, and it must vary with the calibre of individual drivers. What is

risky procedure for one man at the wheel might be perfectly safe and reasonable for another with more skill and experience. But whatever differentiation may be desirable on the road, obviously none is possible in a court of law, and so abuses are invited at once. There is also the very important consideration that a conviction for exceeding the speed limit requires the evidence of two witnesses, but one alone is sufficient for the much more serious dangerous-driving charge.

The retention of a reasonable speed limit—say 40 m.p.h.—would remove much of this difficulty, but there is the risk that the establishment of such a limit might be taken by some drivers as an indication that that was their right and proper speed in all sorts of conditions. Obviously absurd, but there it is.

The fear expressed that the raising or abolition of the speed limit will be followed by a drastic change in the ordinary style and speed of most motorists' driving is groundless. At present no one pays the slightest regard to the 20 m.p.h. limit, and whether that which we all ignore continues to exist, is altered or is abolished cannot be a question of much practical import. We drive at our own chosen speeds when we may, we go slowly when we will, or must, and we shall continue to do so, limit or no limit. In principle and as a matter of pure theory no limit is obviously better than some arbitrary figure; everything turns on how the new regulations are applied when they become law, and that is a matter that only time can settle.

That some provision for third party insurance would be made must be accepted as inevitable, but it is impossible to find any excuse for the utterly unnecessary provision that drivers must carry their policies with them. This is a mere irritating restriction serving no useful purpose. And there is one serious omission from the Bill—whatever else it does or leaves undone it ought to make it illegal, with really heavy penalties, for a car to be left standing on the road at night with its head lamps alight.

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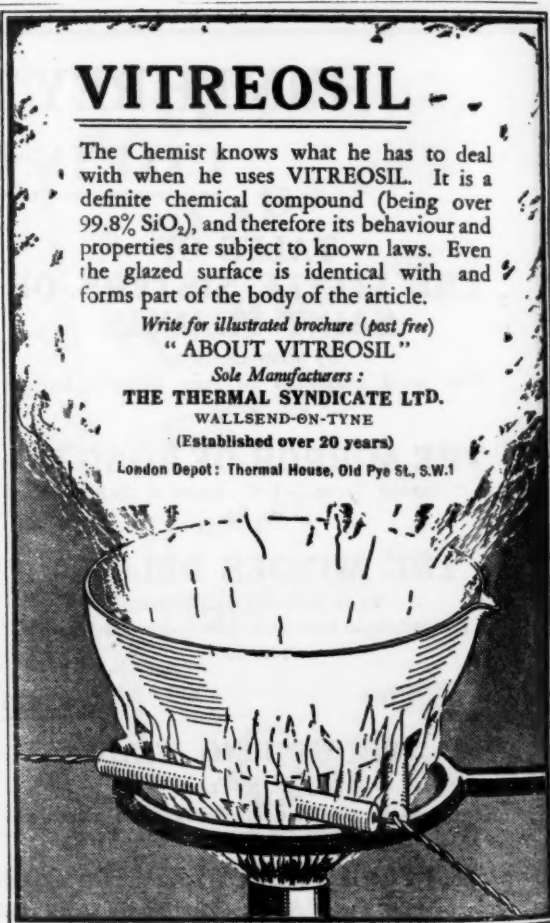
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NOTES FOR COLLECTORS

BY CHARLES E. RUSSELL

IT behoves all fine-art collectors to take stock of their purchases from time to time and to consider whether they have bought wisely even if too well. To such prudent people a glance through Messrs. Christie's record of their more important sales during the season 1928-29 is most instructive. It will be seen that, as has been the case for some time, the general tendency is for objects of art of the first rank to increase steadily in value, while those of not such good quality do no more than hold their own. In the case of pictures, fine examples of Raeburn, Zoffany, Richard Wilson, Antonio Canal, and the better class of sporting subjects are fetching prices not dreamed of twenty years ago. On the other hand, the "best-sellers" of the Royal Academy in the Victorian days now hardly evoke

a languid bid, and a large canvas by Rosa Bonheur for which 4,200 guineas was paid in 1888 brought this year an offer of 46 guineas only. Had our fathers very bad taste in Art? I think so; but even if I am right there were exceptions in those days, for present-day opinion strongly commends the judgment shown many years ago by such collectors as Mr. Jones, Sir Richard Wallace and Mr. Salting. And what chances they had!

To turn to other matters, it is pleasant to note that the authorities of the British Museum have pledged themselves to complete the purchase of the Louterell Psalter, a most important acquisition, for, strange as it may seem, the quaint illustrations of this manuscript are one of our chief sources of information about English life in the time of Chaucer and Piers Plowman. The fate of the later, but almost equally important, fifteenth-century Psalter written for John, Duke of Bedford, with its miniature portraits of celebrities of the time, is still in the balance. Mr. Pierpont Morgan, who last July purchased the two Psalters for

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Thanks to the foresight of our predecessors, our National Collections are quite excellent, but new and unexpected treasures, as instanced above, are constantly coming into the market. The small public grants available are wholly inadequate to maintain by purchase this standard of excellence. Hence private generosity and pecuniary support are absolutely necessary if our museums are to maintain their hitherto unequalled supremacy, and it is most urgent that all art lovers should send any contribution they can afford, however small, to the National Art-Collections Fund, whose none too ample resources are administered so wisely in aid of purchases for the nation.

Another possible acquisition which may be considered by the Fund is that of a magnificent set of Chinese altar vessels now on view at 128 Mount Street. These *wu ts'ai* polychrome porcelain pieces of the Wan Li period come from the Hsi Ling or Western Tombs (some eighty miles southwest of Peking), where lie buried Yung Cheng and other Emperors and members of the Manchu Imperial family.

As to forthcoming Exhibitions, we shall soon see at Burlington House a wonderful assemblage of pictures of the Italian School. On smaller lines, the Burlington Fine Arts Club promise, for the delectation of members and their friends, two exhibitions: the first, shortly to be opened, will show a miscellaneous collection of objects of art. As regards English furniture, the selectors, we understand, will endeavour to borrow fine examples of some of the late eighteenth-century cabinet-makers, such as Seddon and Gillow, and so "pull the leg of the purists" by demonstrating that a quarter of a century or more after the time of the great Thomas Chippendale there were still craftsmen who could turn out pieces of good design and faultless workmanship. Later on, the Committee will skip nimbly back some thousand years or more and open in May "An Exhibition of Art in the Dark Ages in Europe" (say about 400 to about 1000 A.D.).

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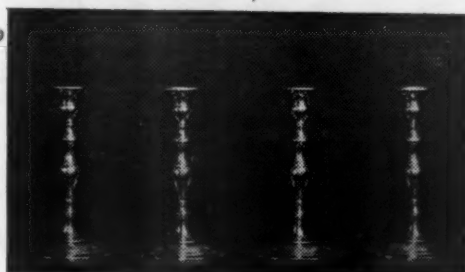
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Among the complete works are Bach's second Brandenburg Concerto in F major, Haydn's 'Clock' Symphony, a violin Concerto by Mozart, two of Beethoven's Sonatas, Strauss's 'Till Eulenspiegel' and Elgar's Concerto for violin and orchestra. The Brandenburg Concerto is played by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra under Stokowski, who here displays an ability to let well alone that has not always been conspicuous in his recorded performances. The sixth side of the three records is filled with a transcription of a Chorale Prelude, in which the orchestra gives a very good imitation of organ-tone and achieves a resounding climax (H.M.V.). The 'Clock' Symphony played by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under Toscanini (H.M.V.) shows that the conductor's almost fabulous reputation is not exaggerated. This is a superb performance, sufficient to whet the appetite for his visit to London next summer.

The record of 'Till Eulenspiegel' (Parlophone) is of special interest, as it has been made by the orchestra of the Berlin Staats-Oper under Klemperer, who proved at the second of Mrs. Courtauld's concerts what can be done by a first-rate conductor with an orchestra, which has otherwise been playing very badly. The performance of Strauss's tone-poem is very brilliant and is excellently recorded. Mozart's violin concerto in A, played by Joseph Wolfsthal with the same orchestra (Parlophone), is less desirable.

Elgar's Concerto is, on the other hand, admirably played and well recorded by Albert Sammons with an orchestra conducted by Sir Henry Wood (Columbia). The two Sonatas by Beethoven are the 'Kreutzer' for violin and pianoforte and the E flat ('Les Adieux,' Opus 81a) for pianoforte. Thibaud and Cortôt give a characteristic performance of the duo, and for gramophone purposes it could not, perhaps, be better done.

Haydn's quartet in G major, the first of Opus 76, played by the Poltronieri Quartet (Columbia), was better recorded by the Budapest Quartet some time ago.

Among the smaller things may be mentioned a recording of the two tenor airs from 'Don Giovanni,' sung by Max Hirzel (Parlophone). The vocal tone is not very free, but on the whole the enormous difficulties of these airs are competently surmounted. The St. George's Singers, who recently gave a very successful concert at the Wigmore Hall, have recorded Byrd's motet 'Justorum animæ' (Columbia). This is as good a record of the old polyphonic music as I have heard. Another record to be borne in mind is of two duets by Purcell, sung by Norman Allin and Harold Williams (Columbia). 'Sound the Trumpet' is particularly good. And for those who like plenty of notes to the second there is a recording of Liszt's 'Tarantella di bravura,' played by Frederic Lamond (H.M.V.). H.

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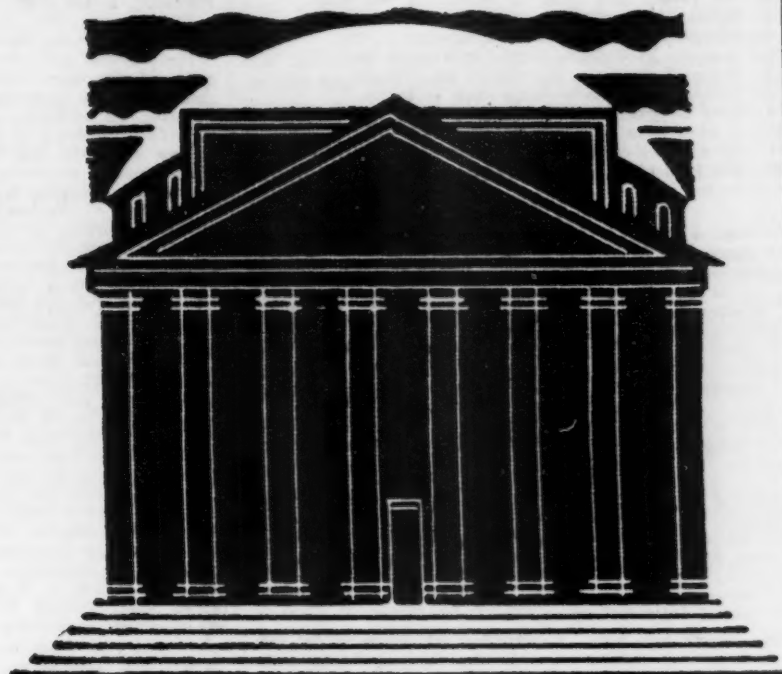
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N	ascen	T	With public toil and private teen.

M. Arnold.

ACROSTIC No. 401.—The winner is Mr. John Lennie, Southleigh, Murrayfield, Edinburgh, who has selected as his prize 'Sisyphus: or the Limits of Psychology,' by M. Jaeger, published by Kegan Paul and reviewed in our columns on November 23 under the title 'Is Psychology Meaningless?' Sixty competitors chose 'Open House in Flanders,' eleven 'The Life of Solomon,' etc.

Other results held over. Competitors are asked to cut out and forward this announcement to the Acrostic Editor with their solutions, instead of the customary coupon, which has been crowded out of this issue.



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Company Meetings

TATE & LYLE, LIMITED

BENEFITS FOR CONSUMERS

The Twenty-Seventh Annual Ordinary General Meeting of Tate and Lyle, Ltd., was held on Thursday last at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, E.C., Sir Ernest W. Tate, Bart. (the President), in the chair.

The secretary (Mr. Charles R. Hutchinson), having read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditors,

The president said: Gentlemen, before dealing with the actual result of our own refineries, I should like to make a few general remarks concerning the Refining Industry as a whole.

During the seventeen months following the Budget of 1928, the refining industry in this country has been able to expand to such an extent that it is now able, not only to take care of the whole of the country's present requirements of refined sugar without the assistance of any foreign refined sugar imports, but it also has a considerable margin of reserve to provide for a greatly increased consumption of sugar.

A development has taken place which may have an important bearing upon the fate of the home-grown beet sugar industry when the subsidy is further decreased and ultimately removed.

I refer to the fact that the beet factories are now enabled to import and refine sugar during that period of the year when their crops are in the ground and the factories normally at a standstill. These factories have imported and refined since May 1928, about a quarter of a million tons.

There have been altogether 1,300,000 tons more raw sugar imported for refining purposes during that period as compared with the corresponding seventeen months prior to the Budget, and the effect of this increase upon employment is widespread.

Take for example coal.

It is computed that approximately one ton of coal is required to produce three tons of refined sugar, so that the increased consumption of coal during the period referred to above amounts to a colossal figure in the region of 400,000 tons. In view of the importance of the coal problem in the economic life of the nation, it is gratifying to feel that the success of British sugar refining in this country must be reflected in an important stimulating improvement on that sorely tried industry of coal mining.

I will now turn to the activities of our own refineries. It is with great satisfaction that I am able to report, that as a direct result of the change in the incidence of the sugar duties made in the Budget of 1928, we have been able to keep our factories running at high pressure and without that interruption and intermittent slowing down which is so fatal to the prosperity of any manufacturing concern.

Those with experience of manufacturing costs will realize what the effect of this has been upon the cheapening of the costs of production. I can state quite definitely that it is our increased turnover and uninterrupted working that are mainly responsible for the cheapening of our costs of production and for our increased profits. I say "mainly" advisedly, for it is not entirely due to this. We have also improved our methods of refining and as a result of constant and diligent research, and at much expense, we have now the most up-to-date and economical refineries in the whole of the world.

Possibly some people, on reading that we have improved our position, and increased our profits, may say "What about the consumer. Has he benefited?" I think I shall be able to convince the most sceptical by a recitation of the plain facts that he has benefited, not only by the full extent of the reduction of the duty, but has also shared in the reduction resulting from our lessened costs of production. Let us examine the course of prices.

Just before the Budget of 1928, the price of our refined product was 30s. 4½d. per cwt. with raw sugar standing at 12s. 10½d. per cwt., that is, a difference of 17s. 6d. per cwt.

On April 25 of that year, raw sugar was 13s. per cwt. and our selling price was 28s. per cwt., that is, a difference of only 15s. per cwt., due to the fact that we reduced our prices by the full amount of the reduction in the duty on raw sugar, that is, 2s. 4½d. per cwt. To-day, raw sugar certainly cannot be purchased in appreciable quantities under 8s. 9d. per cwt., and our selling price is 22s. 10½d. per cwt., or a difference of 14s. 1½d.

In other words, although the world's market price of raw sugar has declined 4s. 3d. per cwt. since April 1928, our refined selling prices have been lowered by 5s. 1½d. per cwt., and there is no important sugar consuming country in the whole of the world where refined sugar can be purchased by retail cheaper than in the United Kingdom at the present time. The retail price is 2½d. per lb., and it may interest you to know that our profits this year represent considerably less than one-tenth of a penny per pound on the sugar we produce. So much for the consumer.

You will remember that I referred last year to increased employment, not only in the refining industry itself, but also in industries which are allied to it. Now, it is a difficult matter, as the Lord Privy Seal recently admitted, to gauge exactly the effect of increased employment in any one industry upon indirect employment—that is to say, employment in related

(Continued on page 708)

THE CITY

Lombard Street, Thursday

CONDITIONS on the Stock Exchange continue to be uninteresting, the volume of business is reduced to a minimum, and it is difficult to see when a change can be expected.

RESTRICTION SCHEMES

Considerable interest has been aroused by the announcement that the Executive Committee of the Tin Producers' Association have been authorized by their full body of members to bring into operation, if possible, the scheme which they have put forward for controlling the output of the metal. It would appear that this scheme entails no restriction on the output from the mines, but restriction on the part of the smelters as to the quantity of tin ore which they smelt. Producers are to be invited to consent to a voluntary holding up by the smelters of a maximum of 10 per cent. of the tin ore which reaches them, if the metal market at the time does not enable the full 100 per cent. of tin produced being sold at what the Association considers an economic level. It is suggested that £225 per ton is the price aimed at. While it certainly appears uneconomic for tin producers to use up their ore reserves in placing tin on the market at a loss to the producing company, in view of the very great margin that exists between working costs of tin producers in various parts of the world, it is by no means certain that this scheme will be of material assistance. It may lead to increased production on the part of the cheap producers, and the effect on the price of the metal of reduced stocks of tin will be greatly minimized by the knowledge that, in addition to the stock of tin, there is a vast accumulation of tin ore with the smelters waiting to be smelted.

Up to recent years it has always been the custom to allow the prices of minerals and commodities to be influenced by the natural laws of supply and demand. It is a cause of uneasiness that to-day in so many directions it is being found necessary to try to evolve workable restriction schemes owing to supply having outrun demand. Despite the past history of rubber restriction schemes, a fresh scheme for the control of rubber is now under consideration. The price of copper is believed to be unduly high as a result of the American control, and doubts are expressed as to whether it will be possible to maintain this. Brazil has recently passed through an acute financial period, owing to the coffee restriction scheme not working as anticipated. It is suggested that a scheme is under discussion for restricting the plucking of tea. The output of diamonds has always been controlled, and it is rumoured that schemes are under consideration for restricting the output of platinum, while a curtailment of oil production is a problem which has been under the consideration of the oil kings for a long time.

Although all or any of these schemes may be helpful to the industries concerned while they are functioning successfully, once they have been introduced and found unworkable the position is seriously aggravated, and the industries are left in a more parlous condition than before.

CARRERAS

The figures announced by the directors of Carreras for the year ended October 31 last indicates, as anticipated, that this really remarkable company has achieved another record, the net profit amounting to £1,285,154, which compares with £1,154,250 for last year. Shareholders are to receive a final dividend of thirty-five per cent. free of tax, making fifty per cent. for the year, which is the same rate as last year, despite the fact that in the interval the ordinary share capital has been increased by a twenty-five per cent. free bonus, which free bonus is also to be repeated this year in addition to the dividend.

TURNER AND NEWALL

The confidence that has been expressed in these notes in the past as to the prospects of Turner and Newall, the manufacturers of asbestos goods and insulating and pharmaceutical products, appears justified by the figures for the year ended September 30 which have now been published. The net trading profits amounted to £904,633. After deducting depreciation, directors' fees and adjustment of taxation amounting to £79,835, the net balance is £824,798, which compares with £592,224 the previous year. These figures are particularly satisfactory, in view of the fact that it is stated that in arriving at these results no credit has been taken from the profits of any of the companies comprising the Bells Asbestos group which were acquired at the end of last year. Shareholders are to receive a final dividend of fifteen per cent. making, with the interim dividend seventeen and a half per cent. for the year, which compares with fifteen per cent. on a smaller capital last year. Turner and Newall shares seem well worth retaining.

PERU CORPORATION

The recent declaration of the 5 per cent. dividend on Peru Corporation Preference Stock, together with the announcement of the results of the company's last financial year, have proved disappointing to the market, with the result that the price has been marked down. At the present level Peru Corporation Preference Stock shows a yield of over 8 per cent., and as it is felt that the corporation should benefit as a result of its new contract, it would appear that at the present level this stock possesses attractions for mixing purposes. Naturally, there is an element of speculation, but this is normally shown by the high yield obtainable. As for Peru ordinary, admittedly a considerable period is likely to elapse before the stock enters the dividend paying list, but in view of its popularity as an International gambling counter, those prepared to take the risk may find a purchase of the ordinary stock at the present level remunerative for the long shot.

TAURUS

COMPANY MEETINGS

In this issue will be found reports of the meetings of the following companies: Oceana Consolidated Co., Ltd., Venezuelan Consolidated Oilfields, Ltd., Tate and Lyle, Ltd.

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industries—but we can, at any rate, give some important figures showing increased use, by us, of materials other than sugar and coal.

Take, for example, bags. During the seventeen months from May 1, 1928, we have used six million more jute bags—all made in this country—than during the corresponding seventeen months prior to the Budget of 1928. Other important increases are: paper bags, 111½ millions; cartons, 9½ millions; paper, 8 million sheets; and water, 274 million gallons.

It will also be gratifying for you to know that after supplying the needs of this country we have exported over 50,000 tons more sugar than during the same period.

This greatly increased use of materials by us has undoubtedly benefited the industries engaged in their manufacture and it is easy to believe the complaints, voiced through their Press, of heavily State-aided refineries on the Continent, regarding the loss of trade and employment, not only in their refining industry, but in all the industries related to it. They attribute this, quite rightly, to the increased trade of the British sugar refiners.

But the benefit to employment caused by our greatly increased output extends much further than to those engaged in the manufacture of the materials used by us.

By reason of the fact that it requires about 110 tons of raw sugar to make 100 tons of refined sugar, it is obvious that for every 100 tons of foreign refined sugar which this country does not need to import raw sugar to the extent of 110 tons is imported in place of it. This means increased shipping, employment in unloading, lighterage and handling.

The outstanding facts which emerge, therefore, as a result of this review of our work under the new conditions, are as follows:

1. British refiners and British beet-sugar factories have greatly increased their output, in fact, foreign refined sugar has been practically driven out of this country.
2. The consumer has benefited, as we have conclusively shown.
3. Much more labour has been employed by the British beet-sugar factories and all the allied trades.
4. British interests have gained, and the foreigner alone has suffered.

Last year I mentioned that four of the beet-sugar factories in this country were producing raw sugar, one wholly and three partially. This year I am pleased to be able to report to you that these four are now producing wholly raw sugar, and in addition, two more, namely, Felstead and Wissington have followed suit and we have contracted to take the output of all these six factories.

You may remember that we took a somewhat prominent part in assisting the Greenock sugar refining industry to re-start. Messrs. Walker's Refinery, which had been closed, is now running to full capacity and as a result of a year's working they show very satisfactory results. The Glebe Sugar Refinery has also been re-started with our assistance.

In addition we have purchased the old-established sugar refinery of Messrs. Fairrie and Co., Ltd., which adjoins our Liverpool property. Members of the Fairrie and Macfie families, who were shareholders in this business wished to dispose of it, and your directors thought it would be in the interests of shareholders in Tate and Lyle, Ltd., that we should acquire the property and run it in conjunction with our Liverpool works. I may add that this refinery is well equipped, and in the few months in which it has been under our control, the results have been satisfactory. It has been asked in the Press if Messrs. Fairrie's profits for the year have been brought into our accounts, thus augmenting our trading profits. I should like to point out that this is not the case, and that only the profits from August 1—the date we acquired the business—have been included in our accounts. The dividends on the beet-sugar factories in which we are interested are satisfactory. I should like to state here that the large sum of £100,000 which we have placed to Investment Reserve Account does not represent a sum allocated to off-set depreciation in our gilt-edged securities, which have already been written down to the market price of the day, but is part of a conservative policy framed to write off our holding in the beet-sugar companies in which we are interested, and, together with the £60,000 we placed last year to this account, making altogether £160,000, more than represents the total dividends received from the beet companies during the past few years to September 30, 1929.

The price of raw sugar declined during our financial year from 10s. 3d. to 7s. 9d., but has since recovered to 8s. 9d. This decline is due to over-production. Prices have now reached a level at which it is believed to be impossible to grow sugar without loss in the majority of the cane-growing countries of the world, and, were it not for the fact that very nearly one-half of the world's production is encouraged by state assistance, by way of subsidy, either direct or through the operation of customs duties, economic forces would long since have adjusted the equilibrium between supply and demand at a price considerably above the present level.

Attempts have been made to enlist the sympathy of all the chief sugar producing companies with a scheme to regulate production to conform more closely to requirements, but the universal support, without which such scheme would be doomed to failure, has not materialized, and it is unlikely that any more will be heard of it.

The following figures may be of interest:—

	May, 1928 to Sept. 1929	May, 1926 to Sept. 1927
Imports into the U.K.		
Unrefined	2,768,000 tons	1,464,000 tons
Refined	152,000 "	858,000 "
	2,920,000 tons	2,322,000 tons
Home Grown Factories Refined during their " Off " Season about	250,000 tons	
Total Exports of British Refined Sugar	169,000 tons	104,000 tons

Before concluding, I wish on behalf of the Board to express to the staff and workpeople in our employ, our cordial thanks for the support they have given us during the past year. As far as I am aware, there has been no friction of any kind, and I am sure the workpeople realize the advantage of continuous and steady employment without those breaks which have been necessary in the past. I think their attitude towards their employment shows this. I thank one and all most sincerely.

The balance sheet now presented speaks, I think, for itself, but if there are any questions, I shall be pleased to answer them.

The president moved: "That the directors' report and statement of accounts be adopted and that the following dividends upon the company's issued capital be declared payable, viz., (a) To the holders of preference shares, interim dividend to March 31, 1929, of 6½ per cent. per annum, subject to tax, paid June 15, 1929; final dividend to September 30, 1929, at 6½ per cent., per annum, subject to tax; (b) To the ordinary shareholders; interim dividend of 4 per cent., subject to income tax, paid June 15, 1929; final dividend of 11 per cent., subject to income tax, making a total of 15 per cent. for the year.

Sir Leonard Lyle (chairman of the company), seconded the resolution.

Sir Douglas Newton, K.B.E., M.P., congratulated the board on a successful year's trading and the resolution was carried unanimously.

The retiring directors were re-elected; the auditors were re-appointed; the chairman announced that the dividend warrants would be posted on the 14th inst., and the proceedings terminated with a cordial vote of thanks to the chairman, directors and staff.

OCEANA CONSOLIDATED CO., LTD.

GREATLY IMPROVED FINANCIAL POSITION

The Annual Meeting of the company was held at Winchester House, London, E.C. on Friday, November 29, the chairman, Mr. Berkeley Fairfax Congrave presiding over a large attendance of shareholders. The accounts showed a net profit of £55,200, as compared with £50,620 for the previous year. After adding the balance brought forward there remained an available balance forward of £88,639. The Board felt that in view of the confidence crisis which had taken place since the close of the company's financial year, it would be wiser to retain the company's liquid cash resources unimpaired. After dealing in detail with the accounts and drawing attention to the greatly improved financial position, the chairman said that with regard to investments, a substantial interest was held in Kirklees Ltd. This artificial silk manufacturing company had been entirely reconstructed and refitted and its factories equipped with the most modern plant, to enable an increased production from about twelve tons of rayon per week to a capacity of about fifteen tons weekly. A small interest was held in the important Branton Artificial Silk Company. An interest was taken in English Stockings Ltd. which controlled the Klinger Manufacturing Company, whose hosiery works at Edmonton were among the largest of the kind in the world. English Stockings Ltd. had secured the right to install in this country the first Maratti High Speed Knitting Machine, which it is claimed will practically revolutionize the manufacture of non-ladderable knitted fabrics.

The company also held investments in mining, sisal, financial and industrial concerns from which in due course adequate returns were also indicated. When the present Board took office they were in the position of having to nurse investments which came to them as legacies. In some cases there seemed prospect of improvement, while in regard to others a considerable measure of success could be reported. As a consequence of the advances made to the Taquah and Abosso, that company had been able to undertake an extensive development programme, and the monthly returns now showed a profit of £2,000 per month instead of a loss. Conditions generally since the close of the company's financial year had not been propitious for a finance company. Fortunately, the hurricanes of the past few months found the company in good shape to withstand them. The Board had built up a substantial general reserve; the carry-forward had been largely increased and the position of the company strengthened.

The report and accounts were adopted and a cordial vote of thanks passed to the chairman.

Company Meeting

VENEZUELAN CONSOLIDATED
OILFIELDS

SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS AT PALO SECO

The Tenth Annual Ordinary General Meeting of Venezuelan Consolidated Oilfields, Limited, was held on November 29 at Winchester House, Old Broad Street, E.C.

Mr. John Lion presided and in dealing with the present position and prospects said: It may be within the recollection of some of you that it was agreed at our last annual general meeting that, as a consequence of the capital being reduced by £380,000, our assets should be reduced likewise, and, therefore, various items shown in the balance-sheet before you, under the heading of assets, will not again appear in our accounts.

You will observe under the head of income and expenditure that there is an item of £24,305 charged for wells abandoned, including the payment of £7,500 for cancellation of the drilling agreement with Petroleum Options. I may say, in this connexion, that all our existing wells are producing in a steady manner and, judging by the reports we receive about them, the current year's accounts will be free from any substantial debit in respect of abandoned wells. I am sure you will all agree that this is a matter for congratulation and should be the means of turning our present debit into a satisfactory credit balance.

Expenditure in respect of royalties, legal and professional charges has been heavy in the past year and will not recur.

About the end of last May, the Executive Government of Trinidad granted your company a licence to drill on 684 acres of our Palo Seco Estate. Subsequent to this date a further grant by the Government to drill on 326 acres has been made to your company. Your company also holds other freehold lands and leases in Palo Seco of 141 acres, making in all about 1,131 acres.

PALO SECO

In the interval from about June 1 to date, we have successfully completed in Palo Seco seven wells, which have yielded a total production of 96,810 barrels, and I am glad to say the eighth well is expected to be brought in during next week. The Palo Seco oilfield affords a remarkable instance of the value of geological research coupled with a courageous policy of development. The credit for this is entirely due to British Controlled Oilfields, Ltd. Just about the time that it was beginning to be slowly recognized that British Controlled Oilfields had really discovered an oilfield at Palo Seco, your company's operations were confined to Fyzabad. The opportunity made apparent by events at Palo Seco was seized and sufficient property was acquired to allow of your company taking an important part in the development of the Palo Seco region.

Up till recently practically the whole of the Palo Seco production has been obtained from the upper 800 feet of the oil measures. Late developments have shown the lower horizons, known as the Cruse Sands, to be highly productive. The limit of productive territory at Palo Seco has not yet been reached in any direction by your company or by any other. Oil is being produced on the East, South and South-West boundaries of your property. It is, therefore, a self-evident fact that at least a large proportion and possibly the whole of your property has undoubted prospects of being oil bearing.

PRODUCTION AND SALES

For 1928 we produced a total of 27,000 tons. At the present moment we are producing at the rate of 5,000 tons per month, which is 60,000 tons per annum. Over the next year we should be producing a minimum of 10,000 tons per month or 120,000 tons per annum. Any production obtained from our Venezuelan concessions under development by the Creole Corporation will be in addition to these figures. I should like to say, in reference to the contract with the Creole Corporation, there has been some delay in the commencement of their operations caused by a new Venezuelan law governing the status of all under-water concessions. We are advised by our Venezuelan lawyers that this matter is in course of being adjusted, and we may expect confirmation of this new legislation at an early date.

The company has entered into contracts whereby it sells all its Fyzabad production and 50 per cent. of its Palo Seco production, to the Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd., and the remaining 50 per cent. of its Palo Seco production to the British Controlled Oilfields, Ltd. Under these contracts, deliveries to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd., from the Fyzabad properties, are made to the pipe lines owned by Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd., and deliveries from the Palo Seco field are likewise made to pipe lines owned or controlled by the Trinidad Leaseholds and British Controlled Oilfields, which serve the Company's Palo Seco area. You will understand the advantages that our company enjoys by having pipe lines serving both its properties in Trinidad. This is a good feature as it renders provision for a large storage unnecessary.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted. At an extraordinary general meeting, which was subsequently held, a resolution was passed altering the articles of association to enable the company to keep a foreign register.

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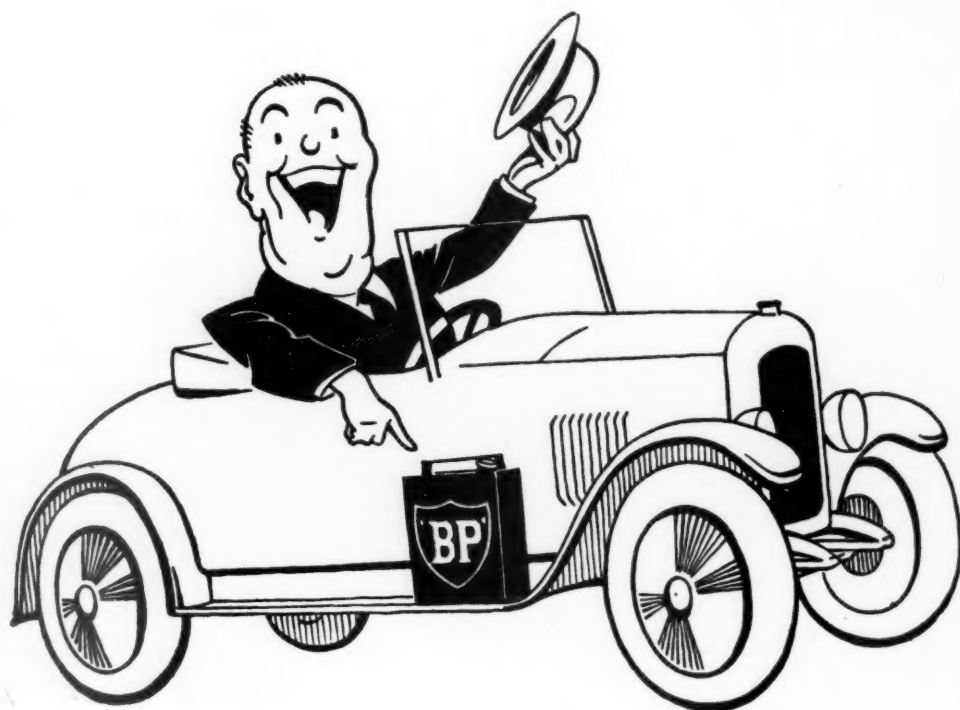
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